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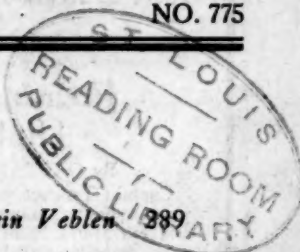
A FORTNIGHTLY

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## *The Modern Point of View and the New Order*

I.

THE INSTABILITY OF KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF

AS IS TRUE of any other point of view that may be characteristic of any other period of history, so also the modern point of view is a matter of habit. It is a trait which is common to modern civilized peoples only in so far as these peoples have come through substantially the same historical experience and have thereby acquired substantially the same habits of thought and have fallen into somewhat the same prevalent frame of mind. This modern point of view therefore is limited both in time and space. It is characteristic of the modern historical era and of such peoples as lie within the range of that peculiar civilization which marks off the modern world from what has gone before and from what still prevails outside of its range. In other words, it is a trait of modern Christendom, of Occidental civilization as it has run within the past few centuries. This general statement is not vitiated by the fact that there has been some slight diffusion of these modern and Western ideas outside of this range in recent times.

By historical accident, it happens that the modern point of view has reached its maturest formulation and prevails with the least faltering among the French and English-speaking peoples; so that these peoples may be said to constitute the center of diffusion for that system of ideas which is called the modern point of view. Outward from this broad center the same range of ideas prevail throughout Christendom, but they prevail with less singleness of conviction among the peoples who are culturally more remote from this center—increasingly so with each farther remove. These others have carried over a larger remainder of the habits of thought of an earlier age, and have carried them over in a better state of preservation. It may also be that these others, or some of them, have acquired habits of thought of a new order which do not altogether fit into that system of ideas that is commonly spoken of as the modern point of view. That such is the case need imply neither praise nor blame. It is only that, by common usage, these remainders of ancient

habits of thought and these newer preconceptions which do not fit into the framework of West-European conventional thinking are not ordinarily rated as intrinsic to the modern point of view. They need not therefore be less to the purpose as a guide and criterion of human living; it is only that they are alien to those purposes which are considered to be of prime consequence in civilized life as it is guided and tested by the constituent principles of the modern point of view.

What is spoken of as a point of view is always a composite affair—some sort of rounded and balanced system of principles and standards, which are taken for granted, at least provisionally, and which serve as a base of reference and legitimation in all questions of deliberate opinion. So, when any given usage or any line of conduct or belief is seen and approved from the modern point of view, it comes to the same as saying that these things are seen and accepted in the light of those principles which modern men habitually consider to be final and sufficient. They are principles of right, equity, propriety, duty—perhaps of knowledge, belief, and taste.

It is evident that these principles and standards of what is right, good, true, and beautiful will vary from one age to another and from one people to another in response to the varying conditions of life—inasmuch as these principles are of the nature of habit—although the variation will of course range only within the limits of that human nature that finds expression in these same principles of right, good, truth, and beauty. So also it will be found that something in the way of a common measure of verity and sufficiency runs through any such body of principles that are accepted as final and self-evident at any given time and place—in so far as this habitual body of principles has reached such a degree of poise and consistency that they can fairly be said to constitute a stable point of view. It is only because there is such a degree of consistency and such a common measure of validity among the com-

monly accepted principles of conduct and belief today, that it is possible to speak intelligently of the modern point of view, and to contrast it with any other point of view which may have prevailed in the Middle Ages or in pagan antiquity.

The Romans were given to saying "*tempora mutantur*," and the Spanish have learned to speak indulgently in the name of "*costumbres del pais*." The common law of the English-speaking peoples does not coincide at all points with what was indefeasibly right and good in the eyes of the Romans; and still less do its principles countenance all the vagaries of the Mosaic code. Yet, each and several, in their due time and institutional setting, these have all been tried and found valid and have approved themselves as securely and eternally right and good in principle.

Evidently these principles, which so are made to serve as standards of validity in law and custom, knowledge and belief, are of the nature of canons, established rules, and have the authority of precedent. They have been defined by the attrition of use and wont and disputation, and they are accepted in a somewhat deliberate manner by common consent and are upheld by a deliberate public opinion as to what is right and seemly. In the popular apprehension, and indeed in the apprehension of the trained jurists and scholars for the time being, these constituent principles of the accepted point of view are "fundamentally and eternally right and good." But this perpetuity with which they so are habitually invested in the popular apprehension, in their time, is evidently only such a qualified perpetuity as belongs to any settled outgrowth of use and wont. They are of an institutional character, and they are endowed with only that degree of perpetuity that belongs to any institution. So soon as a marked change of circumstances comes on—a change of a sufficiently profound, enduring, and comprehensive character, such as persistently to cross or to go beyond those lines of use and wont out of which these settled principles have emerged—then these principles and their standards of validity and finality must presently undergo a revision, such as to bring on a new balance of principles, embodying the habits of thought enforced by a new situation, and expressing itself in a revised scheme of authoritative use and wont, law and custom. In the transition from the medieval to the modern point of view, for example, there is to be seen such a pervasive change in men's habitual outlook, answering to the compulsion of a new range of circumstances which then came to condition the daily life of the peoples of Christendom.

In this mutation of the habitual outlook between

medieval and modern times, the contrast is perhaps most neatly shown in the altered standards of knowledge and belief, rather than in the immediate domain of law and morals. Not that the mutation of habits which then overtook the Western world need have been less wide or less effectual in matters of conduct; but the change which has taken effect in science and philosophy, between the fourteenth century and the nineteenth, for instance, appears to have been of a more articulate character, more readily defined in succinct and convincing terms. It has also quite generally attracted the attention of those men who have interested themselves in the course of historical events, and it has therefore become something of a commonplace in any standard historical survey of modern civilization.

It will also be found true that the canons of knowledge and belief, the principles governing what is fact and what is credible, are more intimately and intrinsically involved in the habitual behavior of the human spirit than the habitual elements of human behavior in other bearings. Such is necessarily the case, because the principles which guide and limit knowledge and belief are the ways and means by which men take stock of what is to be done and by which they take thought of how it is to be done. It is by the use of their habitual canons of knowledge and belief that men construct those canons of conduct which serve as guide and standards in practical life. Men do not pass appraisal on matters which lie beyond the reach of their knowledge and belief, nor do they formulate rules to govern the game of life beyond that limit.

So, congenitally blind persons do not build color schemes, nor will a man without "an ear for music" become a master of musical composition. So also, "the medieval mind" took no thought and made no provision for those later-arisen exigencies of life and those later-known facts of material science which lay yet beyond the bounds of its medieval knowledge and belief; but this "medieval mind" at the same time spent much thought and took many excellent precautions about things which have now come to be accounted altogether fanciful—things which the maturer insight, or perhaps the less fertile conceit, of a more experienced age has disowned as being palpably not in accord with fact.

That is to say, things which once were convincingly substantial and demonstrable, according to the best knowledge and belief of the medieval mind, can now no longer be discerned as facts, according to those canons of knowledge and belief that are now doing duty among modern men as conclusive standards of reality. Not that all persons who are born within modern times are thereby rendered unable to

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know and to believe in such medieval facts, for example, as horoscopes, or witchcraft, or gentle birth, or the efficacy of prayer, or the divine right of kings; but, taken by and large, and in so far as it falls under the control of the modern point of view, the deliberate consensus of knowledge and belief now runs to the effect that these and other imponderables like them no longer belong among ascertained or ascertainable facts, but that they are on the other hand wholly illusory conceits, traceable to a mistaken point of view prevalent in that earlier and cruder age.

The principles governing knowledge and belief are primary and pervasive, beyond any others, in that they underlie all human deliberation and comprise the necessary elements of all human logic. But it is also to be noted that these canons of knowledge and belief are more immediately exposed to revision and correction by experience than the principles of law and morals. So soon as the conditions of life shift and change in any appreciable degree, experience will enforce a revision of the habitual standards of actuality and credibility, by force of the habitual and increasingly obvious failure of what has before habitually been regarded as ascertained fact. Things which, under the ancient canons of knowledge, have habitually been regarded as known fact—as, for instance, witchcraft or the action of bodies at a distance—will under altered circumstances prove themselves by experience to have only a supposed reality. Any knowledge that runs in such outworn terms will turn out to be futile, misleading, meaningless; and the habit of imputing qualities and behavior of this kind to everyday facts will then fall into disuse, progressively as experience continues to bring home the futility of all that kind of imputation. And presently the habit of perceiving that class of qualities and behavior in the known facts is therefore gradually lost.

So also, in due time, the observances and the precautions and provisions embodied in law and custom for the preservation or the control of these lost imponderables will fall into disuse and disappear out of the scheme of institutions, by way of becoming dead-letter or by abrogation. Particularly will such a loss of belief and insight, and the consequent loss of those imponderables whose ground has thereby gone out from under them, take effect with the passing of generations. An imponderable is an article of make-believe which has become axiomatic by force of settled habituation. It can accordingly cease to be an imponderable by a course of unsettling habituation. Those elders in whom the ancient habits of faith and insight were ingrained, and in whose knowledge and belief consequently the imponderables in question had a vital reality, will

presently fall away; and the new generation, whose experience has run on other lines, is in a fair way to lose these articles of faith and insight by disuse. It is a case of obsolescence by habitual disuse. And the habitual disuse which so allows the ancient canons of knowledge and belief to fall away, and thereby cuts the ground from under the traditional system of law and custom, is reenforced by the advancing discipline of a new order of experience, which exacts an habitual apprehension of workday facts in terms of a different kind and thereby brings on a revaluation and revision of the traditional rules governing human relations. The new terms of workday knowledge and belief, which do not conform to the ancient canons, go to enforce and stabilize new canons and standards, of a character alien to the traditional point of view. It is, in other words, a case of obsolescence by displacement as well as by habitual disuse.

This unsettling discipline that is brought to bear by workday experience is chiefly and most immediately the discipline exercised by the material conditions, the exigencies that beset men in their everyday dealings with the material means of life, inasmuch as these material facts are insistent and uncompromising. And the scope and method of knowledge and belief which is forced on men in their everyday material concerns will unavoidably, by habitual use, extend to other matters as well, so as to affect the scope and method of knowledge and belief in all that concerns those imponderable facts which lie outside the immediate range of material experience. It results that, in the further course of changing habituation, those imponderable relations, conventions, claims, and perquisites that make up the time-worn system of law and custom will unavoidably also be brought under review, and will be revised and reorganized in the light of the same new principles of validity that are found to be sufficient in dealing with material facts. Given time and a sufficiently exacting run of experience, and it will follow necessarily that much the same standards of truth and finality will come to govern men's knowledge and valuation of facts throughout, whether the facts in question lie in the domain of material things or in the domain of those imponderable conventions and preconceptions that decide what is right and proper in human intercourse. It follows necessarily—because the same persons, bent by the same discipline and habituation, take stock of both and are required to get along with both during the same lifetime. The scope and method of knowledge and valuation will control the thinking of the same individuals throughout, at least to the extent that any given article of faith and usage which is palpably at

cross purposes with this main intellectual bent will soon begin to seem immaterial and irrelevant, and will tend to become obsolete by neglect.

Such has always been the fate which overtakes any notable articles of faith and usage that belong to a bygone point of view. Any established system of law and order will remain securely stable only on condition that it be kept in line or brought into line to conform with those canons of validity that have the vogue for the time being; and the vogue is a matter of habits of thought ingrained by everyday experience. And the moral is that any established system of law and custom is due to undergo a revision of its constituent principles so soon as a new order of economic life has had time materially to affect the community's habits of thought. But all the while the changeless native proclivities of the race will assert themselves in some measure in any eventual revision of the received institutional system; and always they will stand ready eventually to break the ordered scheme of things into a paralytic mass of confusion if it can not be bent into some passable degree of congruity with the paramount native needs of life.

What is likely to arrest the attention of any student of the modern era from the outset is the peculiar character of its industry and of its intellectual outlook, particularly the scope and method of modern science and philosophy. The intellectual life of modern Europe and its cultural dependencies differs notably from what has gone before. There is all about it an air of matter-of-fact, both in its technology and in its science, which culminates in a "mechanistic conception" of all those things with which scientific inquiry is concerned, and in the light of which many of the dread realities of the Middle Ages look like superfluous make-believe.

But it has been only during the later decades of the modern era that this mechanistic conception of things has begun seriously to affect the current system of knowledge and belief, and it has not hitherto seriously taken effect except in technology and in the material sciences. So that it has not hitherto seriously invaded the established scheme of institutional arrangements—the system of law and custom—which governs the relations of men to one another and defines their mutual rights, obligations, advantages, and disabilities. But it should reasonably be expected that this established system of rights, duties, proprieties, and disabilities will also in due time come in for something in the way of a revision, to bring it all more nearly into congruity with that matter-of-fact conception of things that lies at the root of modern civilization. The con-

stituent principles of the established system of law and custom are of the nature of imponderables, of course; but they are imponderables which have been conceived and formulated in terms of a different order from those that are convincing to the modern scientists and engineers. Whereas the line of advance of the scientists and engineers, dominated by their mechanistic conception of things, appears to be the main line of march for modern civilization. It should seem reasonable to expect, therefore, that the scheme of law and custom will also fall into line with this mechanistic conception that appears to mark the apex of growth in modern intellectual life. But hitherto the "due time" needed for the adjustment has apparently not been had, or perhaps the experience which drives men in the direction of a mechanistic conception of all things has not hitherto been driving them hard enough or unremittingly enough to carry such a revision of ideas out in the system of law and custom. The modern point of view in matters of law and custom appears to be somewhat in arrears, as measured by the later advance in science and technology.

But just now the attention of thoughtful men centers on questions of practical concern—questions of law and usage—brought to a focus by the flagrant miscarriage of that organization of Christendom that has brought the war upon the civilized nations. The paramount question just now is what to do to save the civilized nations from irretrievable disaster, and what further may be accomplished by taking thought so that no similar epoch of calamities shall be put in train for the next generation. It is realized that there must be something in the way of a "reconstruction" of the scheme of things; and it is also realized, though more dimly, that the reconstruction must be carried out with a view to the security of life under such conditions as men will put up with, rather than with a view to the impeccable preservation of the received scheme of law and custom. All of which is only saying that the constituent principles of the modern point of view are to be taken under advisement—reviewed and, conceivably, revised and brought into line—in so far as these principles are constituent elements of that received scheme of law and custom that is spoken of as the status quo. It is the status quo in respect of law and custom, not in respect of science and technology or of knowledge and belief, that is to be brought under review. Law and custom, it is believed, may be revised to meet the requirements of civilized men's knowledge and belief; but no man hopes to revise the modern system of knowledge and belief to bring it all into conformity with the time-worn scheme of law and custom of the status quo.

Therefore the bearing of this stabilized modern point of view on these questions of practical concern is of present interest—its practical value as ground for a reasonably hopeful reconstruction of the war-shattered scheme of use and wont, its possible serviceability as a basis of enduring settlement, as well as the share which its constituent principles have had in the creation of that status quo out of which this epoch of calamities has been precipitated.

The status quo ante, in which the roots of this growth of misfortunes and impossibilities are to be found, lies within the modern era, of course, and it is nowise to be decried as an alien, or even as an unforeseen, outgrowth of this modern era. By and large, the stabilized modern point of view has governed men's dealings within this era, and its constituent principles of right and honest living must therefore, presumptively, be held answerable for the disastrous event of it all—at least to the extent that they have permissively countenanced the growth of those sinister conditions which have now ripened into a state of world-wide shame and confusion. How and how far is this modern point of view, this established body of legal and moral principles, to be accounted an accessory to this crime? And if it be argued that this complication of atrocities has come on, not because of these principles of conduct which are so dear to civilized men and so blameless in their sight, but only in spite of them, then what is the particular weakness or shortcoming inherent in this body of principles which has allowed such a growth of malignant conditions to go on and gather head? If the modern point of view—these settled principles of conduct by which modern men collectively are actuated in what they will do and in what they will permit—if these canons and standards of clean and honest living have proved to be a fatal snare, then it becomes an urgent question: Is it safe, or sane, to go into the future by the light of these same established canons of right, equity, and propriety that have been tried and found wanting?

Perhaps the question should rather take the less didactic form: Will the present experience of calam-

ities induce men to revise these established principles of conduct, and the specifications of the code based on them, so effectually as to guard against any chance of return to the same desperate situation in the calculable future? Can the discipline of recent experience and the insight bred by the new order of knowledge and belief, reenforced by the shock of the present miscarriage, be counted on to bring such a revision of these principles of law and custom as will preclude a return to that status quo ante from which this miscarriage of civilization has resulted? The latter question is more to the point. History teaches that men, taken collectively, learn by habituation rather than by precept and reflection—particularly as touches those underlying principles of truth and validity on which the effectual scheme of law and custom finally rests.

In the last analysis it resolves itself into a question as to how and how far the habituation of the recent past, mobilized by the shock of the present conjuncture, will have affected the frame of mind of the common man in these civilized countries; for in the last analysis, and with due allowance for a margin of tolerance, it is the frame of mind of the common man that makes the foundation of society in the modern world. And the fortunes of the civilized world, for good or ill, have come to turn on the deeds of commission and omission of these advanced peoples among whom the frame of mind of the common man is the finally conditioning circumstance in what may safely be done or left undone. The advice and consent of the common run has latterly come to be indispensable to the conduct of affairs among civilized men, somewhat in the same degree in which the community is to be accounted a civilized people. It is indispensable at least in a permissive way, at least to the extent that no line of policy can long be pursued successfully without the permissive tolerance of the common run; and the margin of tolerance in the case appears to be narrower, the more alert and the more matter-of-fact the frame of mind of the common man.

THORSTEIN VEBLEN.

## Humoresque

"Heaven bless the babe," they said;  
"What queer books she must have read!"  
(Love, by whom I was beguiled,  
Grant I may not bear a child!)

"Little does she guess today  
What the world may be," they say.  
(Snow, drift deep and cover  
Till the spring my murdered lover!)

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY.

## Reconstructing American Business

THERE is a special reason why the American business man is particularly interested in planning for the period after the war. Today he is virtually a stranger in his own domain. Whichever way he turns, whatever phase of business he looks at, all is changed under the strangely pallid mercury lamp of war. His old familiar market places and grooves of activity, in fact the very atmosphere in which he was accustomed to work, seem lurid, hectic, altered. Slowly his consciousness is becoming aware that business not only will not be, but cannot be, what business was before the war.

Is there any wonder then that everywhere business men are groping, thinking, and planning concerning the time after the war? For a year or more business buried itself in the task of preparation for war. The great war-time business machine which resulted swallowed up, to a large extent, the peace-time business machine. But having finally put the great war machine into successful and resultful operation, the live business man, as is his wont, is thinking of the next big job, which he knows is after-war adjustment—rehabilitation of the peace-time business machine, a monster job.

How does he know this? Because he is on the front line here at home in the industrial part of warfare, which no one now doubts is the vital supporting platform for any modern military effort. He sees that factories, offices, workers, executives, money, equipment, material, and transportation have quite as definitely, if not as literally, as the soldier or sailor himself, discarded their regular work and gone across the sea to fight. The sense of radical change, of reversal of aim and effort, and of the purely temporary nature of the strange new war task, is just as great with the manufacturer and business man as with the soldier, performing actions he had never even dreamed of performing, in a land he had never expected to see—and expects to quit as soon as he "licks the Kaiser."

Being a planner and an organizer, and by nature of his occupation a student of risk and a preparer for the practical future, the business man, even in the midst of the war, is becoming restless at the outlook he faces. Responsibility weighs upon him for the maintenance of a strong and steady industrial pace—easy enough now, but what of the day to come? Labor, even though now too fully preoccupied with its unprecedented wages to worry much over the future, naturally looks to him to provide a continuation of the present condition of plenty of work at good wages. The prospect of the return

of the soldiers makes the business man as uneasy as a hostess who knows a troop of hungry guests are coming soon and is not sure whether she will have enough for them to eat. The guests are taking it for granted that there will be plenty, but the hostess knows that it cannot happen without much planning and work in advance. If the feast is not to prove a disappointment—or worse, a famine—there can be no delay, and certainly no shirking. The directors of labor, like the hostess, will never be forgiven if they fail. Their excuses will sound very silly.

When such men get together at a club and talk it over, as they so often do now, what is their process of thought and action?

They face five hard and terrifically challenging facts:

- (1) That on the day Germany invaded Belgium and started the great war, there was in America a surplusage of about 300,000 railway cars standing idle; that American industry was running at only about 60 per cent capacity; and that there were many thousands of men idle, with many municipal and national efforts to alleviate unemployment.
- (2) That now, through "war orders," we have speeded up industry to an extent which has increased our annual volume of manufacture from about \$25,000,000,000 to about \$46,000,000,000; utilizing every human being—male, female, halt, or lame—who could be impressed into service; raising the enormously grave question of whether we can hope to keep this pace on the cessation of war orders, and of what will happen if we can't keep this pace.
- (3) That approximately 18,000,000 people have changed their peace-time occupations in whole or in part, and will need to go through a readjustment after the war.
- (4) That labor has become accustomed to somewhat inflated war-time standards of wages and living, and will (from the point of view of the business man) present a very serious psychological problem in itself when necessity calls for re-establishment of levels more normal.
- (5) That as soon as the war aim is achieved there will be on the one hand a natural relaxation of what has been and is an almost perfect national unity of aim and effort, and on the other hand either too much or too little of government control over business, with the result that much

confusion, conflict of selfish individualistic, political, class, and sectional interests, discouragement of vital organizing ability, and chaos may follow.

To be quite blunt, the set of five factors outlined above is proving sufficient to create a formidable amount of pessimism, an actual fear of an after-war panic. Those business men who are not inveterate optimists, who are not "bulls on their country's future," say that we are certain to have a very severe depression, do what we will, because private orders cannot at once supersede government war orders in the volume necessary to keep the wheels whirling at anything like their present pace.

More optimistic minds pin their faith to the interaction of compensating economic forces throughout the world; in business language, the substitution of rebuilding and restocking orders for war orders. It has been estimated that the destruction on land in Europe amounts to at least \$250,000,000,000; while Dr. Dernberg in Germany estimated the destruction of ships and goods at sea in one year alone (1917) as \$6,225,000,000. Europe therefore needs from 300 to 500 billion dollars' worth of material; while, in addition, general commercial stocks are low all over the world. These factors will assuredly require top-speed production for a period of years to bring them back to normal. Such is the theory and the faith, but there is a veritable storm cloud of criss-crossing factors—economic, transportation, political, strategic, and military—which casts the haze of uncertainty and danger over the first year or two after the war.

And those first years are admittedly the critical ones. No one doubts that after several years, when demobilization and readjustment will be general and complete, there will be unprecedented prosperity for America. It is the vital interim between the first authentic hint of peace and the time when the world is in full operation again on a peace basis that gives pause to thinking business men.

The more analytical, constructive minds wish to leave nothing to faith or feeling, but are keen for constructive action to be begun at once—aggressively, intelligently, with a sure practical touch and no fumbling, political log-rolling, delay, or inept dallying. They have that business imagination which has made America what it is, and they have the confidence and the energy to forge their imagination into reality. They would apply the tools of organization and analysis to the situation and force the problem to an issue now, with definite, many-departmented plans of action to take care of each individual one of the great strains we shall be under. They want the splendid coherence and breadth of operation of the great war business machine to be

utilized as a great peace business machine—and what is quite as important, operated, as now, by business men with experience and skill enough to get results from such heavy-duty mechanism.

It is a real fear which business men have that when the war ends we shall, on a false conception of completion of patriotic duty, relinquish our high-pitched effort and our integration of national strength, and place in control again that type of executive which our first war effort proved we cannot trust to do big-scale work. Added to this is the fear that these very men who have responded to the war call to lead successfully our industrial mobilization at considerable personal sacrifice will not continue their services to the country during reconstruction.

Now that I have depicted as well as I can the state of mind of business regarding the after-war situation, it may be interesting to inquire what practical program business is working for and what practical preparations for after the war it is making.

What government action would business like to see? Three or four national or partly national organizations of business men, as well as individual business organizations, and of course many far-sighted individual business men, have gone on record either in discussions, resolutions, or interviews. There is a vigorous call for a special cabinet Ministry of Reconstruction, or a special After-the-War Planning Commission, composed of broad-gauge business men assisted by experts. The fact that England has had a Ministry of Reconstruction headed by Lord Balfour, with a total of eighty-five specialized committees, at work since 1916—to say nothing of reconstruction commissions in all other Allied countries—has served to lend emphasis to this demand by business men.

As for the Weeks resolution calling for a commission of Congressmen—six Democrats and six Republicans—it does not have the approval of business men generally, for the very obvious reason that it proposes authority to rest with a group of partisan legislators. Why should the legislative branch of government undertake a work purely executive in character? How would the War Industries Board have fared headed by six Republican and six Democratic Congressmen? Yet, in the view of business men, it is quite as vital that a Reconstruction Ministry or Commission be operated after the fashion of the War Industries Board with one man control, and that man a business man. Above all it is hoped that the after-war planning will not be blighted by the political jealousies of parties jockeying for advantage and prestige. The fact that the Administration's Overman bill, calling for a commission,

not Congressional, is closer to the ideas of business men than the Weeks bill does not mean that the business man's interest is a partisan one. As a matter of fact there is doubt whether either bill will meet the requirements as business men see them.

The concrete phases of reconstruction in which business men are interested, and which they believe should be separately and individually covered by committees or bureaus, are the following:

- (1) demobilization
- (2) factory conversion
- (3) export development and international commercial policy
- (4) merchant marine
- (5) fuel, food, and vital materials
- (6) transportation
- (7) price stabilization
- (8) commercial and industrial research and statistics
- (9) labor and employment management
- (10) post-war financing
- (11) government control
- (12) allotment and raw-material conservation
- (13) housing
- (14) distribution
- (15) sales-management
- (16) administrative efficiency
- (17) cost analysis
- (18) consumption efficiency
- (19) public administrative efficiency
- (20) retail and wholesale
- (21) publicity
- (22) industrial education
- (23) repatriation
- (24) occupational fitness and psychology
- (25) woman in industry
- (26) credit conservation and control
- (27) tariff
- (28) agriculture
- (29) priority and coordination
- (30) special and miscellaneous

If such a group of thirty committees looks formidable to anyone, let the *eighty-five* committees and boards of Great Britain be remembered. There is immediate and practical work for every one of the above named committees, whose joint efforts could be unified by a priority and coordination committee, as indicated.

Business is very earnestly interested in everything pertaining to the development of our export trade, because in its serious desire to find markets that will take care of the surplus \$20,000,000,000 factory production over peace times, it sees that we must sell huge quantities abroad. Before the war

we held about 5 per cent of the world's trade; and if we had, in 1914, desired to operate our factories at their full peace-time production, it would have been necessary to get 35 per cent of the world's export trade. Now, with our huge added factory capacity, we should have to add almost *all* the world's export trade to our own consumption to equal our present production capacity. In other words, we have arrived at that astounding moment in our economic history when we have capacity for satisfying not only most of our own needs but in addition the export needs of almost the entire world.

Of course we shall not get anything like all the trade of the world—we are mere children in the handling of foreign trade. But as a first step business has welcomed the Webb bill permitting combination for export—a necessary thing since England and Germany are planning to use this tool very fully. We should also be sending a number of economic commissions abroad to individual countries to develop facts about the situation and make personal our expected business relationship. Next, business is now getting behind the Sims bill calling for a national trademark, so that the very great good will which our stand in the war has been developing for the United States in all parts of the globe may not only be made of trade advantage to us, but also that there may be a safeguard against misrepresentation either by unscrupulous American firms or foreign imitators. On our new merchant marine, under the stars and stripes, it is proposed that only such American goods shall be carried as have the same integrity back of them that our war actions have had back of them. Since we are a young country in export, it is vital that American goods be so marked, particularly since it is a well-known trick of Germany to palm off goods as American.

Individual business men are naturally at work on reconstruction problems according to their own judgment of what is to come. Take the problem of the munitions manufacturer who before the war did a \$12,000,000 annual volume of business and who now, because of war inflation, does a \$60,000,000 volume. He has built about fifty acres of additional floor space, has added many thousands of new workers. The first concrete move for peace will bring cancellation of his orders, and then he will need to make something else. He is busy working out what that something else shall be. So, of course, are other manufacturers; and the result is that intense effort to increase the consumption of these articles will follow after the war. Other business men who handle stocks of goods are everywhere agreeing that they must be caught by peace with only a minimum of goods on hand, as prices will

quite certainly fall. Still other business men are frankly "putting their houses in order" for the expected peace-time pressure, carefully studying efficient methods, installing every plan and system for economy and efficiency, preparing their post-war sales and advertising campaigns. Over a year ago the chief executive of a large mid-western concern told me that he permitted no war-time matter to come to his desk—only after-war matters. The same is true of many other big executives. Many entire lines of industry have had to put themselves on a highly economical basis, because of war pressure on raw materials. Through the agency of the United States Chamber of Commerce 100 industries have unified themselves, so that a national committee from each has power to bind the industry for any action deemed necessary by the War Industries Board. Astonishing unity for the elimination of waste has been achieved through such concerted effort. Thirty million yards of woollens have been saved by the agreement of textile interests upon styles. The height and color—even the price—of shoes, the content of food products, and the sizes of tires have been agreed upon as war-time economy measures. These are now not only expected to be-

come permanent after-war economies, but trade abuses and wastes not yet eliminated are planned to be eliminated when the coming of peace provides time and further incentive. The reduction of large numbers of models is certain to be made a reconstruction as well as a war policy by hard-headed business men. A manufacturer of saws once made 3,500 different models; today he makes 500. A plow-maker once made 2,000 models; now he makes 25. Paint manufacturers once made about 100 different colors; now they have agreed upon 32.

In short, the war has acted, in the industrial sense, as a forced attendance at a school of necessity which has developed remarkable peace-time economies and efficiencies which are still in the bud and which during reconstruction days will blossom forth into their real value and power. Business knows this, and is keen to apply the new-found lore. Those with business vision believe that the changes in the temper of business men themselves and their newly developed power for coordinated action spell a new upward trend in business after the war which will very likely achieve fresh marvels of national progress.

J. GEORGE FREDERICK.

## *An Imaginary Conversation*

GOSSE AND MOORE

### II.

GOSSE. Don Quixote is another masterpiece that ends unsatisfactorily.

MOORE. I'm glad you mentioned Don Quixote. Defoe called him to your mind, for Cervantes too was a literary hack, writing many comedies, autos, and poems, unworthy trash till he stumbled upon a subject which he wrote as well as it could be written till he came to the end of his inspiration. The coming to the end of one's inspiration is always pathetic, and for Cervantes the loss was doubly cruel, for it came suddenly and went suddenly, like a wind. A fine wind it was while it lasted; a finer never blew peradventure, not excepting the wind that carried the plays along—Hamlet and Lear. Cervantes sailed out of harbor in a grand gale. Who lives that does not sometimes think of the Castilian gentleman, exalted by a long reading of the literature of knight-errantry, discovering armor in a garret and repairing the helmet with brown paper on wire?

GOSSE. Admirable, thrice admirable is the description of the knight himself. Nor do I think that it is going too far to say that never in literature has so perfect a correspondence been found between

the spirit and the flesh. And all you who have sought for this correspondence will accept the knight of the rueful countenance as the unparalleled example in which the flesh or lack of flesh proclaims the soul.

MOORE. Turgenev described a fitting envelope for the spirit of Bazaroff, but Turgenev's conception is small compared with the world-wide figure of the knight riding forth by himself in the first instance, and then returning in search of an esquire. As we watch the twain riding side by side through the highlands we seem to be looking upon some great sculpture of Egypt and Assyria. Never was the world so wide before nor gestures so eternal.

GOSSE. And we seem to be listening to Shakespeare himself, who was a contemporary; and this sets me thinking that perhaps the special quality of their humor was not the insular possession of England, but belonged to the great century that produced these two men. They could not have known each other, and yet . . . But I must not allow our conversation to drift into Shakespearean controversy. You said that never was the world so wide before nor gestures so eternal.

MOORE. As in the first adventures when the

knight charged the flock and afterwards the wind-mill. And is it not thrilling to remember that they were on their way to the inn in which Don Quixote was enrolled by the innkeeper? And indeed I cannot keep myself from mentioning the vigil undertaken at the instigation of the innkeeper. Think of it! or of telling you that it was the innkeeper who sent the knight home in search of an esquire. The don returns with Sancho mounted on an ass—was ever before an imagination so epical? And how splendid the blanketing of Sancho in the inn and the account of the evil-smelling slut stealing by mistake into the knight's bed, and he lying between sleeping and waking, dreaming of Dulcenea, instead of into the bed of the lusty waggoner who had been looking forward to her all that day for many weary miles. After reading these pages I lay immersed in genius, like a mediæval saint in God, the host still melting on his tongue; and I continued in ecstasy till the twain reached an almost savage landscape so admirably described.

The time must have been late in the afternoon, for there still lingers in my mind a memory of peaks brilliant against the sun setting, and my ear still holds like a shell Don Quixote's voice telling Sancho that he wishes to strip himself naked and stand upon his head, and Sancho begging the knight to refrain, saying that the sight of his master's naked rump in the air will bring up his stomach.

GOSSE. You will allow me to interrupt you for a moment. The credit of introducing landscape into fiction has always been granted to Rousseau. But your mention of the rugged landscapes in Cervantes puts it into my mind that the honor of introducing landscape background into fiction really belongs to Cervantes. I remember the landscape you allude to; it is brushed in with the energy of Salvator Rosa.

MOORE. It is indeed, and many others. But I would remind you that yourself deprecated the introduction of Shakespearean controversy into our talk; and you did well, and I did ill when I spoke of Egyptian and Assyrian sculpture, for the landscapes through which the knight and his escort follow their adventures are superterrestrial. We have left our miserable little planet for a larger one, Jupiter maybe, and the book drops from our hands in amazement when the Don throws his heels into the air. Cervantes' last inspiration—no, the last is Sancho turning in the saddle, and catching sight of the knight's shanks above his shirt; he drops into reverie, falls to considering his relation, for he is on his way back to recount the knight's last exploits to Dulcenea.

The book should have ended here, for God himself could not have invented adventures more wonderful than those that have been. I have forgotten

if the meeting with the gang of convicts, Don Quixote's charge, and the subsequent misunderstanding, and the severe beating he receives as soon as he has freed them from their chains, comes just before or just after Sancho's departure. For the sake of a clear division between the inspired and the uninspired Cervantes, I would have it come before. But it may come in the next division of the story, Nature being the real author and Cervantes no more than her mouthpiece. Nature is good at detail, but lacks rhythm; she lingers and spoils the harvest with an aftermath. It may come in the next division; yet I do not see how it can, for we are introduced to new characters, and stories are told that no one remembers—Moorish maidens who became Christians and such like. A faint memory lingers in me of a curate. Do you remember?

GOSSE. My unfortunate memory, oh, my unfortunate memory.

MOORE. There is no reason for being disheartened, not this time, for it may be doubted if even Mr. Fitzmaurice Kelly could give any lucid account of these stories, though he refused to collaborate with me in an edition that would exclude all extraneous matter and follow closely the fortunes of the knight and his esquire. He was right, for his closer study of the book than mine had revealed to him, let us hope, the truth that the original inspiration was too wonderful to be continued by gods or men; and henceforth Cervantes, the hack writer, turns the handle of his hurdy-gurdy, setting Don Quixote and his esquire dancing to the old tune—Don Quixote starting out on some new adventure, Sancho holding up his hands.

GOSSE. It has often been said that a finer and nobler nature begins to appear in the knight in the second part; and I do not think that this is untrue to nature, for if we contain any grain of good it ripens as we live.

MOORE. The change in the knight, if there be any change, does not help us to any new appreciation of him; and I say this though I know in saying it I am at variance with Turgenev, who drew the attention of the Moscow students to the death of Don Quixote, trampled to death by a herd of swine, and to the last words of the chivalrous knight. I will not ask you what they are; I too have forgotten them, and only remember that "though all things pass away, even beauty, chivalry, and truth, goodness remains." A stupid paraphrase doubtless, but a beautiful idea it is, truly, that he who had followed goodness all his life long should find his death at last under cloven hooves. But the herd of swine is introduced into the story casually—a casual thought introduced into a casually composed sequel in which Sancho becomes a pour of proverbial wis-

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down, while the knight rides wrapped in meditation, like Falstaff; for Shakespeare, too, intellectualized his knight, thereby puzzling the mummers who try to portray him. But, as you said just now, we must not allow Shakespearean controversy to beguile us from our search for a first-rate mind expressing itself in English prose narrative.

GOSSE. As that is our quest, it seems to me that I cannot do better than to ask you to put a precise meaning on the words "a first-rate mind." Kant's mind was first rate, but it was not the sort of mind that instigates works of art; and it has often occurred to me that something more than mere mind is necessary to produce the pictures—shall we say?—of Manet and Degas. Yet a mind is visible in their works.

MOORE. I wonder if we can differentiate between the mind and the instincts of the mind? If we can, I should prefer to say that instincts of the mind are discernible in the works of the great masters. But I'm always apprehensive of metaphysical quicksands and mists, and before putting down the helm I will remark that the artist's instinct is the sail that carries the boat along, and his reason the rudder that keeps the boat's head to the wind; without a rudder the sail loses the wind. The simile seems to hold good. An instinct will carry the artist some distance, but if he have not reason he will drift like the rudderless boat, making no progress at all.

GOSSE. As good an explanation as we shall get of something that will always remain a mystery. If I may continue your thought for you I would say that works in which reason plays too large a part do not satisfy us.

MOORE. Our instincts are deeper than our reason, and it is pleasant to remember that art rises out of our primal nature, and that the art that never seems trivial is instinctive.

GOSSE. If I may do so without seeming egotistical, I would remind you that I have touched on the same point in my *History of English Literature*, saying that George Eliot seems trivial, especially in the books in which she was anxious to seem profound.

MOORE. Quite so. Manet was never anxious, and did not waste time at keyholes like Degas, but said—if not aloud, to himself—we are original or we aren't; but we do not become original by sending away the model who weighs eight stone, and calling in the butcher's wife who weighs twenty-nine and asking her to strip and stand in front of a tin bath, or by painting one cheek of the wife's backside green and the other blue, like Bernard.

GOSSE. You would regard George Eliot as a trivial writer, and Sterne as serious?

MOORE. Of course I should, Gosse; you're helping me; I cannot find words to tell you how much, and my essay seems to be coming. You're not going? I will not hear of your going; back to your chair, for you're helping me even more than I expected you would, and I expected a great deal of help from you. You are helping me, putting the words I want into my mouth, that the English novel is silly, illiterate, sentimental, erudite, and pompous by turns; but serious, never! How true! And how could it be else, for in the seventeenth century we were living in moated castles defended by retainers who dined with their chief in banqueting halls, raising or lowering the drawbridge as the occasion required; life was too unsettled to admit a literature whose subject must always be, perhaps to a large extent, a description of social life; and it would seem that social life was thrust somewhat too suddenly upon England, drawing-rooms or salons having arrived from France, unimported by any sufficient prose literature. But without regard for this lack of preparation the drawing-rooms insisted on being entertained, and they took what they could get—Tom Jones. I am beginning to see my essay: there was no standard, and it was out of the enthusiasm of our first drawing-rooms that the belief arose which soon developed into a tradition, that Tom Jones shall be accepted as the classic example of English prose narrative.

GOSSE. Born of the Georgian house.

MOORE. Yes, born of the Georgian house—of the Georgian drawing-room.

GOSSE. You couldn't find a better springboard.

MOORE. I'm glad you think so, and I hope you will allow me to continue talking a little longer. You've no idea what a help you are.

GOSSE. Proceed.

MOORE. I read Tom Jones in the influence of the tradition that I have just mentioned, and . . .

GOSSE. I hope you haven't neglected to look into the book again, for if you haven't I cannot help you.

MOORE. Yes, I've looked into the book, and it seemed more lifeless than it did twenty years before, when I read it for the first time. It is now an old and withered tree, whitened branches and gaping trunk. . .

GOSSE. Ready to fall, having aged almost out of recognition in the last twenty years. An excellent impression of a decaying masterpiece; but something more than an impression is necessary in an essay.

MOORE. I can only write my own feelings, and shall have to say that at the end of the first hundred pages the book fell across my knees and set me asking myself how our forefathers had managed to read a book without a glimpse of the world without us,

or any account of the world within us. It is difficult, Gosse, to write vividly about an entirely empty book, vague, like a fog, yet without mystery, and so impersonal that we begin to doubt the existence of the author, and in self-defense have to urge ourselves out of the belief that the book proceeded from some curious machine, a lost invention of the eighteenth century. But machinery was in its infancy in 1750; a living man must have written it or dictated it! The theory that it was gabbled into a phonograph is untenable. Even so, the impersonality of the book would surprise us, so empty are the pages of all traces of preferences and aversions. Since I have begun I must tell all, Gosse. Fielding seems to me to have been without sensibility of any kind, mental or physical; and his book is therefore the most personal and at the same time the most impersonal ever written. Mr. Alworthy, the first person we meet in the book, says nothing that brings him even superficially before us, and we are told nothing about him, though he is the owner of the Georgian house in which the first scenes are laid, and the pivot on which the story turns. We drop the book to consider this strange reticence, and come to believe that the author felt it would be difficult for him to set before the reader a man so transparently conventional that he could not be even suspected of having begotten a child, and shrank from a task which, even if it were successful, might weary the reader, to fall back upon a simpler plan of exposition, saying to himself: "The obvious is always the best, and I will call the gentleman Alworthy; the name will allay suspicion even in the most prone to suspicion." A daring interpretation, I admit it to be, of Fielding's mind during the composition of the first part of his notable novel, which you may accept or . . .

GOSSE. Forgive me for interrupting you, but I would not have you fall into the mistake of finding fault with an eighteenth century author for not writing naturalistically.

MOORE. I think my words were: "Without a glimpse of the world without us," and to these I might have added, without even such glimpses as we get from Jean Jacques. In Tom Jones we are in a fieldless, treeless, flowerless planet; but even Fielding's absence from natural description would not matter if the book were not passionless. Any sudden movement of passion or feeling would provoke our sympathy, and we should see in our imagination the sun lighting up the middle distance and the rain cloud above it. A description of Manon is not to be found in the text, but Manon is always before our eyes, for Abbé Prévost realized Manon intensely. But Fielding, in his attempt to describe

Sophia, proves himself to be as insensible to the magic of human life as he is to that of nature.

GOSSE. It is probable that Fielding succeeded better with men than with women, and you will not deny that Squire Western is a very real person and one very typical of the eighteenth century.

MOORE. Squire Western goes his own gait and speaks his own lingo; we see and hear him; but if I may say so without seeming to disparage Fielding needlessly, Squire Western is too obvious to be considered highly; he is hardly more worthy of esthetic criticism than the caricatures of Gilray and Rowlandson. I would not mitigate a merit, but I would have it understood that nature draws so well sometimes that even a very bad draftsman cannot miss a likeness. There can be little doubt that Squire Western is a rough sketch from life, and the invention of the different episodes in the book is so poor that I am inclined to believe that the one good one, the Squire's relinquishment of his pursuit of Sophia to follow a pack of foxhounds that crossed the road in pursuit of a fox, was—like the Squire himself—taken from life.

GOSSE. But you admire Rowlandson?

MOORE. Yes, I admire Rowlandson till somebody speaks of Goya.

GOSSE. And you know Thackeray's opinion that since Tom Jones nobody had dared to paint the portrait of a man in fiction, meaning, I take it, that Fielding was the first to tell us that a young man might be truly in love with Sophia Western and yet commit an act of impropriety with Molly Seegrave.

MOORE. A knowledge which he might have gathered from observation of his bull terrier; and my reproach is that Fielding has not attempted to differentiate between dogkind and mankind, and that he does not seem aware that it is necessary to do so, even in his own mind.

GOSSE. Have you nothing to say in praise of Fielding's style?

MOORE. He writes with gusto, a quality we seldom meet with in modern literature, perhaps because we are becoming more thoughtful; and he keeps it up like an actor who knows he is playing in a bad play.

GOSSE. But you have not told me how you explain away Thackeray's preference for Tom Jones.

MOORE. I find the examination of my own mind so difficult that I cannot for the moment undertake to examine Thackeray's. The best plan will be to try to believe that he spoke casually.

GOSSE. Now I must reprove you for a lack of seriousness. For nearly two hundred years Fielding has held undisputed sway as our prime novelist.

MOORE. We shall meet others in the course of

our literary inquisition whose reputations seem as unmerited as Fielding's. I know I feel that the prospect is a little alarming, but we have lighted our lanterns and are looking about for a serious writer. Let us get on.

GOSSE. But how shall we recognize him should we meet him?

MOORE. Now, Gosse, you are inventing difficulties that do not exist; and I must reprove you, for was it not you that put forward Laurence Sterne and George Eliot as typical examples of the serious and trivial in literature? and with these in mind we shall not miss a really serious writer if our lights should flash him into view. A little patience is all I ask, Gosse; other examples will be discovered later, but we may not anticipate them, for I am eager to remind you that in your *History of English Literature* you speak of the "extreme" beauty of Sterne's style, and the adjective pleases me; I cannot tell you why, but it seems to me to discover the truth, or some of it, and I would merely add that no writer has come down so unchanged as Sterne.

GOSSE. And I welcome the addition. I'm glad that we agree about Sterne.

MOORE. But, my dear friend, we are always agreed, except when you speak of Sterne's unseemly life; a sad remark that is of yours, and if I may be permitted to say so, lacking point; for we could not have Sterne's style without his unseemly life, we accept the one for the sake of the other, just as we accept the unseemliness of Christianity in practice for the sake of the words of Jesus, overlooking the Bishop of London, who . . .

GOSSE. I'm afraid you don't know the Bishop of London.

MOORE. My writings have placed me, alas, under interdiction, and so have yours, Gosse. You mentioned that you are not a member of his club, but neglected to say that you would have been if you had not written a masterpiece. The truth, Gosse.

GOSSE. The Athenaeum Club is becoming wearisome, and I must insist that we return to Sterne without delay. I'm glad that you approve of my adjective, but why it should have taken your fancy so completely I cannot imagine—not at this moment.

MOORE. You say that his selected elements attract the imitation of some more or less analogous spirit, meaning thereby that his selected elements attract an analogous spirit to imitation, a criticism that has a special interest for me, for before I read a line of *Tristram Shandy* or *The Sentimental Journey* the newspapers began to say that the prose of Hail and Farewell recalled Sterne. That my best pages should recall the worst in *The Sentimental Journey*, if it be possible to discern a page

less inspired than its fellow in an inspired work, pleases me to hear, for we may be pleased by flattery without being duped by flattery; and, my curiosity awakened by constant references to Sterne while this book was under review, I abstracted a little red book from the library of a common friend, saying to myself, "Many empty days lie before me, and though I cannot read in a railway train I may be able to read on board a ship." And I read despite the drumming of the screw, raising my eyes from time to time from the exquisite page to the beautifullest of seas, regretful that I was not reading on board a felucca, lateen rigged. The French critic you quote who compared Sterne to one of the little bronze satyrs of antiquity, in whose hollow bodies exquisite odors were stored, seems to me to have wandered near to the truth, inasmuch as *The Sentimental Journey* recalls antiquity, perhaps more than any other book of the modern world. Like a translation of some small Latin or Greek work, it read to me—*Daphnis and Chloe*, or *The Golden Ass*, or which other, I ask, for I am without erudition, as many of the ancients were, but I have the eyes of the ancients, I think.

GOSSE. I should like to hear why *The Sentimental Journey* reminds you of classical literature. Just a feeling. . .

MOORE. A feeling, certainly, but no vague one; it is his sense of touch which never fails him, rather than his speech which often does, that carries my thoughts back to the flowers and leaves and garlands and pilasters and white butterflies of the city disinterred, only known to me through photographs and Mary Hunter's dining-room which came from Venice.

Italy never lost her paganism, and the disinterment of Pompeii was, in a sense, unnecessary. Italy never forgot her antiquity, nor could she forget it—her coasts washed on either side by the bluest of seas. I longed for a felucca, lateen rigged. Its half-dozen rough Italian sailors would not have seemed out of harmony with the legended sea, the birthplace of all our beautiful European gods, as were the passengers who, despite my admonitions, passed through the Straits of Messina, forgetful of Proserpine gathering flowers on the plain of Enna. I spoke to them of rugged Polyphemus peering over some cliffs and discerning Galatea in the foam; I besought them to remember Jupiter, who, disguised in the form of a bull, carried Europa away; and then, turning as a last resource to a more human story, I spoke of Dido weeping on the shores of the African coast.

GOSSE. Without enlisting any recruits?

MOORE. Nobody on board would listen.

GOSSE. Did you try to win the sympathies of the passengers with your theory that art is touch?

MOORE. Why not, Gosse? All audiences are good. I would sooner speak to Bishops than remain silent for six days. Of course I tried to interest the passengers in the legends of the bluest and beautifullest of seas. I spoke of "bitter" Media, Swinburne's best adjective, or one of his best.

GOSSE. But you didn't hold forth to the passengers as you are holding forth to me, did you?

MOORE. It is strange, and much stranger than you would think for, to find oneself cut off from all communication with one's ideas; for on board the ship that took me there was nobody of my kin, nobody who knew me or my writings, or who had read any book that we had read, or seen any pictures that we had seen—a strange sense of estrangement that can be likened to an island and savages, with this difference, that the passengers and myself spoke the same language, but a language alienated from ideas does not amount to much; and you will appreciate my alarm when I tell you that the nearest thing to intellectual sympathy I could find on board that ship was a man who explained his invention for building piers out of concrete. It appears to have been successful somewhere in India, and he was on his way to lay down more boxes of concrete. His account of his invention interested me, for there was nothing else to listen to and *The Sentimental Journey* is, unfortunately, not a long book. Only one other spoke to me; I've forgotten what his occupation in life was, but his ignorance was amusing betimes. "What is that book you're reading?" he asked, one day. I answered, "*The Sentimental Journey*," and began to tell him at once of

my surprise and delight in coming upon the famous phrase "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." "A phrase," I said, "that many believe to be in the Gospels. It sounds like Jesus. It isn't, however, nor is it Sterne's, but a French proverb heard by him from a half-witted shepherdess. The French phrase is not given by Sterne; it is hard to discover it in our English version and the proverb seems to have become forgotten in France, but Sterne's version started it on a new life in England; 'God tempers the wind' is better than 'God measures the wind,' which may be the French proverb. But it was not this improvement that gave the proverb immortality—I say mistranslation, for a shepherdess would not be likely to speak of a shorn lamb. In the French proverb it is the 'yoe' that is shorn." I spell the word phonetically, Gosse, for I prefer the word as shepherds pronounce it. "Sterne changes 'yoe' into lamb, thereby bringing a little pathos into the proverb; and we being a sentimental people," I was saying to the passenger when he interrupted me, "Do you really mean to tell me that he said 'God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb?'" "Yes," I answered. "Which shows," the passenger replied derisively, "that he knows no more about lambs than he does about pheasants. A howler it was when he said that pheasants ate mangel-wurzels, but this is a worse one. Who ever heard of shorn lambs?" My absent-minded companion imagined that I was speaking of Lloyd George! It was Lloyd George, he thought, who said "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," and it seemed useless to point out his mistake to him.

[To be concluded]

GEORGE MOORE

## Victory in the Cabarets

The jazz band struck up Dixie . . . I could see  
A boy from Texas slipping down a trench  
While some gray phantom with a grinding wrench  
Twisted an arm and pulled its bayonet free.  
I saw a blur of mud and flies where three  
Friends from the South had joked about the stench.  
And there, complaining of his lack of French,  
A Richmond black felt for his missing knee.

The fife screamed Yankee Doodle . . . and the throng  
Danced to a ragtime patriotic air.  
The martial fervor grew as several strong  
And well-shaped girls not altogether bare  
Marched with toy guns and brought the flag along,  
While sixteen chorus men sang Over There!

LOUIS UNTERMEYER.

## Reconstruction at Work

WHEN THE Industrial Councils were recommended in March 1917 by the Interim Committee and accepted by Parliament, collective bargaining between employer and employed became, it now appears, a corporate part of England's industrial institution. At the time of the recommendation the Councils seemed nothing more than a logical extension of the trade union movement, or a measure of the strength of the movement in England. But in these days of rapid change and illuminating disclosures, the Industrial Councils, eighteen months after their recommendation, with many already in the first stages of organization, bear a portentous aspect in relation to the after-the-war development of foreign trade.

From the reports received here, the unqualified endorsement of the Councils comes from the employers or from those who assume the responsibility of industry. Industrial Reconstruction: A Symposium on the Situation After the War and How to Meet It, edited by Huntley Carter (Dutton; \$2), reveals an amazing hospitality of employers, statesmen, and economists to the revolutionary ideas back of the Councils; that is, to (a) the substitution of a national organization of industry in place of the present practice of competition between individual business men within the Empire and to (b) the division of industrial management between elected representatives of organized employers and organized workers. The Symposium was published originally by The New Age before the recommendations of the Whitley Committee were presented to Parliament. It may be interesting to Americans to note that public opinion on industrial reorganization was formulated and in fairly concrete shape before any government recommendations were issued. While neither the Industrial Councils nor the principles of reorganization as offered by employers in this book represent the Guild Socialism of The New Age, I think it is fair to acknowledge that the concept of self-government in industry, as opposed to the bureaucratic or autocratic management which the Industrial Councils seem to reflect, is largely due to the more or less single-handed work carried on for a decade by the Guild Socialists.

One of the employers, Mr. A. J. P. Benn, who has contributed with singular clarity to the Symposium, is the author of a remarkable little book—The Trade of Tomorrow (Dutton; \$1.50)—which elaborates the Industrial Councils idea. The machinery that Mr. Benn recommends for the setting up of Trade Councils, as he calls them, is a Ministry

of Commerce, appointed for the purpose of fostering and facilitating the self-advancement of British trade. The principal duty of the Ministry would be the promotion and regulation of Trade Councils within the different industries in accordance with the interest of Empire; that is to say, the interest of England. He proposes that these Trade Councils consist of elected representatives from employers' trade associations and from trade unions; that one-third of the members be drawn from each source representing equally the state, capital, and the wage workers. He proposes that the government refer to these Councils all matters relative to the particular industry they represent. He provides in his plan for an industrial franchise to be granted every citizen, so that each man and woman would have a voice in the three branches of national administration: the Imperial Government, the Local Government, the Industrial Government. He would give the unions of wage earners and the associations of employers semiofficial status and admit industry, to use his own words, to a place in the Constitution.

But why, Americans may ask, are British employers urging labor to perfect the unions and share in the direction of industry? Why are employers proposing to surrender—apparently eager to surrender in part—their precious prerogative? With a directness which characterizes the book Mr. Benn gives this unequivocal answer:

There can no longer be doubt that every trade must present a united front to foreign competition. The struggle of the future in the foreign market will be between German goods, American goods, Japanese goods and British goods, and that competition will be sufficiently severe without further competition between individual British manufacturers. In fact, if the present system remains unaltered, the British manufacturer does not stand a chance against the foreigner.

As a reason for calling in the State on the proposed national reorganization of British trade, Mr. Benn holds:

The interest of the State in trade is that we should supply such goods *instead* of the German, the American, or the Japanese, and the question for the State to answer is: How are these things to be done and who are the people to do them? (*Italics mine*)

Again he says:

While on the subject of export it may be interesting to notice what is happening at the moment on the other side of the Atlantic. The European war has given to American exporters great opportunities for expansion, and as British manufacturers know to their cost, full advantage has been taken of those opportunities. . . . To sum up this question of export, the position is that American trusts have done extremely well, that German cartels have done better, and that British cooperation, if it can be brought about, will do best.

On this proposition of British cooperation financiers and British employers and British statesmen seem to be in substantial agreement. And British cooperation means the alignment of representatives from capitalists and labor organizations. As the foreign trade situation calls for "a united front," there is nothing for it except to cut across class and unite on national lines. The only question in the minds of those who carry the responsibility for maintaining British trade is not whether British capital and labor shall combine for the trade war, but how the unity shall be effected. The answer is the Industrial Councils as recommended by the Whitley Commission, endorsed by the British Trade Congress, by the Gartner Foundation, and other organizations—or the Trade Councils as evolved by Mr. Benn. The machinery which Mr. Benn has described in his book is being established in many industries before the soldiers return from the field.

The principles of national reorganization of industry, represented in this British plan, avoid state administration of industry and the evils of Prussian bureaucracy by throwing the responsibility on the representatives of those actually involved in the promotion and fabrication of manufactured goods. When Germany invaded modern industry it was unhampered, as Mr. Veblen shows in his *Imperial Germany*, by pioneer technology and pioneer organization methods. It started after the Franco-Prussian war with the experience of England to go on, with unencumbered ground for organization. A Prussian state guarded the territory, supervised its cultivation in the interest of the Empire by erecting, as we know, a huge scheme of bureaucratic management and direction. England because of the world war is now taking advantage of the experience of Germany. It is avoiding the cumbersome, unwieldy machinery of a bureaucratic organization; and under *the supervision of the state*, with a national in place of a private concept of industry, it plans a reorganization of trade on a basis of representative government. While the internal organization is representative, the intention of organization is imperial. British statesmen, employers, and economists relinquish their industrial imperialism at home to secure their imperial place abroad. The competition between English business men is to give place to British competition in the trade of the world. This competition requires a solid British front; it requires solidity in the ranks as well as the solidarity of the captains. It is a transfer of national militancy from the battlefield in France to world commerce.

Although the Councils represent the determination of British capital to maintain leadership in world affairs, the adoption of Industrial Councils as

a scheme of organization cannot rest on whether or not they are promoted for imperial purposes. It may happen that the present political strength of the British Labor party, with its opposition to foreign trade war, will cause a modification in policy. The party declared in its program: "We disclaim all idea of economic war. . . . We believe that nations are in no way damaged by each other's economic prosperity and commercial progress."

The intention of British capital, or the capital of other countries, to fight for supremacy in foreign markets cannot however be met by a continued disorganization of industry within the nations, so that a judgment on the formation of Industrial Councils must be made irrespective of motives. The defeat of empires of trade as well as their victory requires national organization strong enough to support and promote a world economy.

Legitimate criticism of the Industrial Councils as a scheme of national organization relates to whether or not the councils are efficacious as agencies of production, and whether they are or are not efficacious as an agency of industrial self-government. It is on these two points that criticism must focus and a judgment be given. Whether or not they are efficient as agencies of production will depend in the long run upon whether they are successful in eliminating the industrial sabotage which is an inherent feature of any system of autocratic management. The most illusive and the most destructive sabotage is the absence of will to produce, the enervation which accompanies *disinterest* in productive enterprise. Mr. Benn undertakes to meet this in part by the decentralization of organization within each industry. Will that decentralization however go far enough to make it possible for each worker consciously and intelligently to articulate his work with the whole scheme of production and actually to participate through his work in the policy of management?

The adoption in England of this representative form of industry nationally organized, in place of the state socialism of Germany, was in recognition of the fact that British labor could only be intrigued in plans for increased productivity and national service through some fulfillment of the interest of each individual worker concerned—either through some material interest or in an awakening of his intellectual interest in the enterprise by his participation in the management. The weakness of the scheme is in its building on the principle of representative government and not on the participation of the individuals in the actual management. Representative government, unfortunately, is as near as Anglo-Saxon imagination has envisaged self-government; but the difficulty in accepting represen-

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tation in industry through officials, in place of some articulated functioning of the whole group of participants, is that under representation the will of the participants is not secured. We can make this assertion with confidence. We have had our experience in political life and in our voluntary organizations. Neither the citizen, nor the member of a union, nor the member of any other association is stimulated merely by his membership and his voting privilege into such continued activity as daily labor requires. We bewail the indifference of the citizen and chide him for not taking his share of the burden, but the institution continues after a fashion and we are satisfied because it is not in form an autocracy. In the case of industry, however, the present point of reorganization will be lost if there is not obtained from the worker an unflagging interest.

Having said so much by way of warning against the expectation that any substitute, such as representation through the appointment of officials, will suffice to arouse the intelligent interest or even the interest of wage earners in wealth production, I want to say with equal emphasis that no other scheme has been proposed which is fraught with the same possibilities for realizing the participation, the actual participation, of the worker in the adventure of creating wealth. Whether these Councils are successful in eliciting the interest and the will of the people to produce depends upon whether the leaders are at present more interested in their own participation in the Councils as representatives than they are in bringing about through shop organization an actual and continued participation of the workers in promotion and management. Supplementary reports of the Whitley Committee, which I have not seen, indicate, I understand, that methods of works or shop management have been considered.

Strange as it may seem to the average worker, who has only an infinitesimal knowledge of the industry of which he is a part, modern efficiency methods of production open up the possibilities of a real articulation for intelligent human effort in the associated life of twentieth century industry. If what is now called scientific management were developed in shop and carried forward, through the workers' own experimentation; and if with their understanding of the situation and with their approval it were made to true up all stages of fabrication, evaluation, and distribution, the workers' interest in production would have opportunity to develop. If participation, actual intellectual participation, of workers in the enterprise and adventure is chimerical, so then is the expectation that in day-by-day labor a continuous will to produce can be secured.

It may be that the Industrial Councils would be successful in increasing output by means of the representative scheme of government, as the tendency of organization in industry has been to decrease warfare and suspend production on account of lock-outs or strikes. I have no doubt that many who speak for the Councils have no more than this in mind. But men like Mr. Benn are after a momentum which is born of a free will to work.

J. R. Clynes, Food Commissioner and member of the Whitley Committee, sounds a warning to those who are expecting the Councils to bring industrial peace. His minority comment, signed by him and four others, is:

While recognizing that the more amicable relations established by industrial councils or trade boards between capital and labour will afford an atmosphere generally favourable to industrial peace and progress, we desire to express our view that a complete identity of interests between capital and labour cannot be thus effected, and that such machinery cannot be expected to furnish a settlement for the more serious conflicts of interest involved in the working of an economic system primarily governed and directed by the motives of private profit.

There is some objection expressed by labor men who have contributed to the Symposium to the lying-down together of the lion and the lamb; but the principles embodied in the Whitley Report have been twice endorsed by the Trade Unions Congress and, from what information I get second-hand, the organization of the Councils is proceeding without serious opposition from labor, and evidently in many cases with labor's active cooperation.

It is clear that labor has no concrete scheme in opposition to the Councils. Up to the present—that is, up to the time of the war—the trade unions had been concerned, for the most part, with protecting wage workers against capitalist aggression. Wage workers had not been concerned with the actual work of promoting production. Perhaps the most forceful contribution made in Huntley Carter's Symposium has come from Mr. John Hilton, of the Gartner Foundation, in his advocacy of joint councils of employers and employees in the administration of industry:

This, or any other more desirable arrangement, is only possible on one condition: that organised Labour definitely abandons its negative or defensive or obstructive attitude, and takes the initiative. When Labour comes to regard industry as its personal concern (instead of merely labour), aims at producing in advance of anyone else its own suggestions for industrial improvement, discovers for itself possible time-saving methods and devices, and threatens to strike if they are not introduced, takes it upon itself to reprimand managers who are incompetent or too easy-going, insists on wasteful competition between kindred firms ceasing, makes technical education a personal matter, insists on doing good work, whatever anyone may say—then Labour will come into its own and a new industrial order will be on its way.

HELEN MAROT.

## A Pointless Pointillist

IF ONE MIGHT conceive, in the heliotrope future, any Ph. Demon so inspired as to set about compiling a list of dull books by interesting authors, one could hardly doubt that Ezra Pound's *Pavannes and Divisions* (Knopf; \$2.50) would be his first entry. An incredible performance! Somehow, one has had all these years (for alas, Mr. Pound's indiscretions can no longer be called the indiscretions of youth) the impression that this King-Maker among poets was quite the most mercurial of our performers. One associated with his name the deftest of jugglery, sleights of mind without number, lightning-like tergiversatility, and a genius for finding the latest procession and leading it attired in the most dazzling of colors. Of course, Mr. Pound has himself been at some pains to encourage us in this view. As a publicist he has few equals. But surely it has not been entirely a deception! . . . And nevertheless he comes now upon us with *Pavannes and Divisions*—"a collection," says Mr. Knopf, "of the best prose written by Mr. Pound during the last six years"—and therewith threatens, if we are not careful, to destroy our illusions about him forever.

For, regrettable as is the confession, the outstanding feature of this book of prose is its dullness. One reads more and more slowly, encountering always heavier obstacles, and—short of a major effort of the will (and a kind of amazed curiosity)—one finally stops. Intrinsically therefore one may say at once that the book is without value. If one is to examine it carefully, one does so for quite another reason; namely, because Mr. Pound is himself an interesting figure—observe his portrait in this volume, so elaborately and theatrically posed—a curious representative of *homo sapiens*, and without any doubt a poet who has (sometimes severely) influenced his fellow poets. *Pavannes and Divisions* shall be to us therefore what the soliloquies of the patient are to the psychoanalyst.

If we pass over the unoriginal parts of this book—the clever translation of Laforgue, and the well-selected dialogues of Fontanelle, amusing but nugatory—and if we listen with concentrated attention to the Mr. Pound who chatters to us, alternately, in the lumberingly metrical and crudely satirical doggerel of *L'Homme Moyen Sensuel*, or the disjointed and aimless prose of the essays and fables, what emerges from this babble? A portrait, sharp-featured as Mr. Pound's frontispiece, but how infinitely more complex—a portrait which surely not even a Vorticist could compass. One is reminded, indeed, of Mr. Sludge, so inextricably the most

sterling platitudes and the most brazen quackeries (no doubt believed in) are here commingled. Add to this that Mr. Pound, like a jack-in-the-box, takes a naive delight in booing at the stately; that he has the acquisitive instincts of the jackdaw (with a passion for bright and shining objects, particularly those spied from a very great distance); that he is unhappy unless he can be rebelling at something or somebody (even at himself of the day before yesterday—and this is healthy); and finally that as a poet he has genius, and has given us more than a handful of beautiful lyrics—and one begins to perceive that Mr. Pound's middle name should have been not Loomis but Proteus. Those to whom Mr. Pound is a thorn in the flesh will say that it is amazing that the poet of Cathay should, in *Pavannes and Divisions*, reveal himself so hopelessly as of third-rate mentality: those who are charitable will say that if a poet is to live he must also be a journalist. There is no chance for an argument, since one cannot possibly tell how seriously *Pavannes and Divisions* is intended. But if one cannot read Mr. Pound's intentions, his accomplishment is obvious and disillusioning. If a poet must be a journalist, let him be a good one! And this Mr. Pound is not.

For in point of style, or manner, or whatever, it is difficult to imagine anything much worse than the prose of Mr. Pound. It is ugliness and awkwardness incarnate. Did he always write so badly? One recalls better moments in his history and one even now finds him, as in the first paragraph of his paper on Dolmetsch, making a music of prose. For the secret of this decay one must turn, as in all such cases, to the nature of the man's mind, since style is not a mere application or varnish but the unconscious expression of a nature. And here is encountered one of Mr. Pound's chief characteristics, one that has from the very beginning been steadily growing upon him and—it might be added—steadily strangling his creative instinct. This characteristic is his passion for the *decisive*. His strokes are all of an equal weight and finality. On the sensory plane this first manifested itself, no doubt, as a desire for the single and brilliant image. In logic or dialectics it became a passion for the point, glittering and deadly. In the field of esthetics it has revealed itself as a need for espousing the out-of-the-way and remote and exceptional, so as to add a sort of impact and emphasis to personality by a solitariness of opinion: it is more striking to play a tune on the Chinese p'i-pa than on the banjo. On these several planes this instinctive appetite has

become more and more voracious, more and more exclusive, until finally it has reached a point where it threatens to leave Mr. Pound little else. His poetry has become imageless through excess of image—image too deliberately sought. His prose has become pointless and merely fatiguing because of his effort to point every sentence: it has become a sort of chevaux de frise, impossible to walk through. These are failures which, one would think, the artist in Mr. Pound would have foreseen. In prose it is a failure made all the more complete by the fact that the pointillist style was the last style for which he was intellectually fitted. Without the patience for careful analysis, or the acumen and precision and breadth for scientific investigation, this method makes of him merely a subjectivist pedant, a tinkling sciolist, and—what is more amazing for the man who wrote *Cathay*—an apostle of the jejune and sterile. For so intent has Mr. Pound become on this making of points and cutting of images that he has gradually crystallized from them a cold and hard doctrine, a doctrine of negative virtues, aimed primarily against esthetic excess but in the upshot totally inimical to that spontaneity and opulence without which art is still-born. In short, Mr. Pound has become, as regards style, a purist of the most deadly sort. So absorbed

has he become in the minutiae of esthetics, so fetichistic in his adoration of literary nugae, that he has gradually come to think of style and filigree as if the terms were synonymous. This is the more lamentable because his esthetics, as revealed in his prose, are by no means subtle. One cannot rear a palace of filigree: nor can one compose a Hamlet or a Tyl Eulenspiegel entirely of velleities and evanescent nuances. Young authors, let us grant with Mr. Pound, must learn to be artisans before they can complete themselves as artists. But at the point where purism stifles exuberance and richness (the intense confession of the sub-conscious) and at the point where, as an esthetic measure, it prefers the neatly-made to the well-felt or the profoundly-thought, it becomes obviously vicious.

It is the critic's license to overrefine his point for the sake of emphasis, and this perhaps, in the present case, we have clearly done. To restore the balance somewhat we should add that, though by no means profound, Mr. Pound is provocative and suggestive in his essays on the troubadours and the Elizabethan translators, and refreshing in his papers on Dolmetsch and Remy de Gourmont. After all, is he perhaps, in his prose, deliberately a journalist? . . . And we remember with gratitude that he is a poet.

CONRAD AIKEN.

## *Fashions of the Peacemakers*

ALTHOUGH war is an institution of civilization, its mood is not natural to lives of civilized men. It creates a tension of feeling and action which seriously perverts the normalities of existence, imparting to them all qualities of intoxication and shrillness. These qualities are unknown among persons actually engaged in the business of warfare, save at the very beginning. Soldiers, sailors, and administrators are too absorbed in doing things to accumulate that mass of fancy and feeling which are the register of wishes unsatisfied and action untaken. Their emotional life consequently exhibits a normality altogether lacking in that of civilians, for whom the interlude between impression and action is so very, very much longer than it is for the military, because they have so much more leisure to accumulate feelings and to think thoughts. Much of the ordinary civilian "war work," much of the obstructive crowding to "get into the game" is the altogether automatic attempt to find relief from this uncomfortable condition. Everybody is uneasy unless he is "doing something" different from the normal, even though the daily adventure of his

normality is the most useful action he can undertake for the winning of the war. This is as true of the laborer as of the leisure classes of "conspicuous consumers" from which are recruited the bulk of the prominent patrioteers. But the leisure classes, just because they have leisure, are of course most conspicuous both in the accumulation of feeling and in the fussy "war work" which drains it off. It shows itself in the fashions of their dress, in their talk, in the ritual and red tape of their committees. It shows itself mostly in the fact that the end aimed at is often so insignificant in value beside the means used. When this occurs the end is only an excuse for using the means, and the means is a relief from the strain of feeling. The knitting of socks and sweaters by hand, where machines would do it so much more swiftly and excellently, is an obvious case in point. Another, not so obvious, is the making of books, particularly of peace books.

In the making of peace books, however, additional factors, almost imperceptible in the making of socks, become quite apparent. These factors are the special interests or idiosyncrasies of the author and what

is usually known as mind or intelligence. Where these exist, they appear invariably together. Intelligence is general, impersonal, the register made on the consciousness of the writer by the structure and articulation of the things he is writing about. It is passive, realistic, and the cause of the general agreements between men. Idiosyncrasy is—idiosyncrasy, the quality and flavor of personality, and it supplies the mental material which incarnates intelligence, which turns intelligence into a working engine. The power which causes the engine to turn out a peace book is the discommoding intoxication and shrillness of the war-mood.

The interest in such books, considered as real confrontations of the controllable causes and problems and cures of war, depends entirely upon the degree in which they actually envisage these things in their order and movement—upon the degree, in a word, in which intelligence is freed from the distorting influence of emotion and idiosyncrasy and reveals the anatomy of the situation as it is in itself. But such a liberation of intelligence can usually not be attained in war time. Peacemaking books are usually written as katharses of the tensions of war. They usually aim to rationalize its emotions and to put them in a cosmic setting which will endow them with the aspect of that normality which they have upset. And the settings will vary with the ideational idiosyncrasies of the writers. Their proposals will offer fashions, but not the true style of peace. Hence monographs like *The Basis of Durable Peace*, by Cosmos (Scribner; 30 cts.), or *The Economic Basis of an Enduring Peace*, by C. W. MacFarlane (Jacobs), tend to be the exception rather than the rule. Cosmos thinks in terms of history and of international law. International law, held in England and in the United States from the eighteenth century on to be national law, is to be administered by a court of justice, which already has its beginnings in the Hague tribunal. Its sanctions must lie, not in such arrangements as are proposed by the League to Enforce Peace, but in the public opinion of the civilized world. Mr. MacFarlane finds his remedy for war in quite other data. He regards business and industry, not politics and law. His book is mainly a description of the French and Belgian need of a share of Germany's enormous surpluse of fuel, and a proposal for a redistribution of the earth's surface by a return of Alsace-Lorraine to France and an expropriation of the German coal lands west of the Rhine, with a compensating free hand to Germany in Asia Minor. The principle underlying this redistribution, neither clearly conceived nor expressed, is that of the equality of economic opportunity for all peoples. Mr.

MacFarlane slumps when he passes finally to the international aspects of the economic basis of an enduring peace; but what he has to say about the former is pertinent.

To turn from his studies and those of Cosmos to *Through War to Peace*, by Albert G. Keller (Macmillan; \$1.25); *The Way Out of War*, by Robert T. Morris (Doubleday-Page; \$1); *The World War and the Road to Peace*, by T. B. McLeod (Macmillan; 60 cts.), is to pass into a new dimension. Relevant and near data are conspicuously absent. There is rhetoric and there is passion. Idiosyncrasy is in play. The German is very cordially hated, and the hatred and the war of which he is the cause are somehow to be rationalized and abolished. Each writer must fit them into his own idiosyncratic system. Mr. Morris' cosmic solvent is biology. Hence war is for him a biological phenomenon, and the peculiar perversity it shows in human "warfare-by-arms" is due to the fact that there is a disharmony between a brain originating in a quadrupedal organism and the biped it is running. After some centuries there will be an adjustment and that sort of war will end. Mr. McLeod, again, is a Christian of some kind or other. He thinks that the only way to stop war is to change human nature. He declares that nothing can change human nature except the gospel of Jesus Christ. If you reply that the gospel has been a longish time at the business, he answers that Jesus nowhere promised that it would be a short time: "unlike mechanical, spiritual forces work slowly." Then too the church, to which Jesus committed his gospel, has been perfidious and has mistaken its vocation, which is to make bad men good. With this Mr. Keller, who is a sociologist, could not agree at all. He says that war is its own panacea against itself, and that the changes of society are impersonal, mechanical, automatic struggles, and result in ever larger groupings which must end finally in an international "peace-group." This war is a conflict between the "international code"—that is, the rules of behavior of decent nations—and the German code, which is a denial of the same. "Societal" law requires that this decaying code shall be utterly stamped out. Germany must be thoroughly whipped if an international "peace-group" is to come about. We must not falter at the finish. The mechanism of the "vast process" of "societal evolution" requires it.

Each of these three writers has his own fashion of securing peace. His appeal can be only to those of his own idiosyncrasy. For in fashion, motley's the only wear of motley natures. Some wear monochrome.

H. M. KALLEN.

## The Morality of Sacrifice

THE FIRST YEAR of France's agony in the war was brightened by a crowd of bellicosely romantic young officers, as Mr. Edmund Gosse calls them, who laid down their lives for their country in a chivalrous and passionate gesture that will keep their names alive. There is already a literature of the letters and journals which they wrote in the crash of battle and under the tension of anticipated death. Their spirit of "superhuman severity which comes from being wholly consecrated to duty" inspired their friends as being the last flare of a tradition which went back to the aristocratic idealism of the later courts under the old régime. This theme Mr. Gosse has taken up in his *Three French Moralists* (Scribner; \$2), in which he has admirably traced this uncritical and yet self-conscious military mysticism to the maxims and personal models with which the genius of La Rochefoucauld, La Bruyere, and Vauvenargues have molded this fragment of the spirit of France. With his love for honor and the things of the soul, says Mr. Gosse, La Rochefoucauld rescued the spirit of France from the degradation and senseless brawls of the Fronde. With his feeling for democracy and for the gracelessness of riches in a world of the impoverished and ignorant, La Bruyere prepared the way for the later humane trends of the "enlightenment." And with his passion for "la Gloire" and his tolerance of human frailty, Vauvenargues brought morality down to earth, and at the same time set a pure and sensitive personal ideal that proved irresistible to the finer youth of his time. These writers, with their austere wisdom, their chiseled reflections, started a moral tradition that has ever since profoundly affected whatever of French youth identified itself either by heritage or sentimentally with the aristocratic classes. And it is "the last ephemeral beauty of this feeling"—the "reflection of the glow which blazed in the hearts of young intellectual officers at the very beginning of the war"—that Mr. Gosse has tried to catch and commemorate in his present essays.

He regrets that it is now gone: "there is now no feather worn in the cap, no white gloves grasp the sword." If the fervor and emotion are still there, they are "at the bottom of the heart." For we know that the old gallantry has been sweated and blown out of France as it has been blown out of the other countries in the massacre of war. It is the common man of Le Feu who now sets the tone with

his superhuman travail and patience. It is the day of the proletarian virtues, of the tradition of "le peuple," of the mass struggles for freedom and for creative instead of servile labor—that strain which has continued side by side in France with this tradition of gallant sacrifice and of the sweetness of dying for one's country. Against the background of this new spirit Mr. Gosse's theme has a certain archaic pathos. Our interest shifts from this old morality of sacrifice to the spirit of those moralists themselves—three writers who will always intrigue us and whose minds can never lose their sanative sting. We ask ourselves: Are they really responsible for the shaping of the later tradition of patriotic chivalry?

It is not so easy to engender Mr. Gosse's young heroes of 1914 directly from their writings. Something has mixed the strain. Now the first reading of La Rochefoucauld is to most of us as much of a shocking experience as the first icy bath. He leaves the mind extremely suspicious whether there is any idea or cause worth dying for in a world where all the virtues and vices trail back to amour propre. Would he not have said that this "magnificent combination of logic and violence," which Mr. Gosse describes as culminating in the resolute sacrifice of war, was the extremest form of self-love? Would he not have said that "duty" was the form in which the individualist intelligent soul accepts the inevitable that is to annihilate him?

Can you not imagine him putting it something like this?

The free spirit is never so free that it is not subtly in the power of its own society among which it lives. In crises such as war, where the nation is called upon by its leaders to act in unison and face privation and death in defense of what they call its sacred honor, the individual is suddenly confronted with the irresistible power of that society. Suffering and death at the hands of the enemy, or suffering and death at the hands of one's country's institutions—these are the stern alternatives presented to the free spirit. To the individual this sudden menace from what has been hitherto a benevolent protecting herd must be intolerable if he once recognizes it. How can my spirit accept coercion in any such form? It is the most wanton affront imaginable to my integrity, to my amour propre, to my sense of personal independence. Yet unconsciously I know that it is insane to resist. I am so much entangled in the emotions of my society that the idea never comes fully to my consciousness that I might even resist. So in order to render palatable to my deepest amour propre this immitigable coercion, I make it my own. I go to meet it, I embrace it, I call it "duty," and I maintain that it was my desire all along. The world has only demanded of me what I was passionately eager to give. My "thy will be done" thus becomes the intensest form of personal pride. It is I, I,

who am laying down my life—not fate or God or misfortune or my ruler who is snatching it from me. Under the guise of "duty" the bitter inevitable becomes my own imagined intensest will!

In other words, doesn't the technique of this classic French moral psychology disintegrate the motives of that gallantry which it had its share in creating? Mr. Gosse is no psychologist. He serenely ignores the question whether La Rochefoucauld would not have remorselessly stripped the glamour from what Nietzsche would call the "detour to suicide" commemorated in this book. But the result is that the book falls into two parts: one, his beautiful tributes to the young idealists who died so joyfully; and the other, his charming monographs on the three moralists. Vauvenargues he makes especially his hero in the argument linking this modern gallantry to the old moralists. And it is true that this most unfortunate yet sweetest of lives—racked by every evil of disease, loneliness, and poverty, yet shining with the most winning clarity of mind and of gracious spirit—is an unforgettable model for youth. He is the writer who said, as Mr. Gosse loves to remind us: "The earliest days of spring have less charm than the budding virtue of a young man." But actually in his maxims Vauvenargues is far closer to La Rochefoucauld than to the mysticism of the modern French youth. Take reflections like these:

Men are persuaded only by fear and hope.

The short duration of life is able neither to dissuade us from its pleasures nor console us for its pains.

The art of pleasing is the art of deceiving.

We have neither the force nor the opportunities to accomplish all the good and all the evil we project.

The suavity of these sentences does not save them from a certain cutting edge that reminds us only of the impish and cynical duke of the court of Louis XIII. In his *Counsels to a Young Man* Vauvenargues adds:

We rarely judge things by what they are in themselves; we blush not for vice but for dishonor.

And in that light irony which is perhaps the highest wisdom he tells his friend that

it is the essence of the mind to deceive itself; the heart has also its errors. Before we are ashamed at being weak, we should be less unreasonable if we blushed for being men.

The psychology of Vauvenargues is altogether witty and revealing, but is it not too penetrating to produce at first hand an unreserved frenzy of patriotic mysticism? These great moralists of the past were the most ruthless of realists. Their lucid intelligence makes not altogether congenial the rhetorical flourishes and uncomplicated sentiments of

young men like the poet who "bid his comrades describe him to his father and mother as 'tombé au champ d'honneur et mort joyusement pour son pays.'" It is true that Vauvenargues died uncomplainingly at thirty-two from disease contracted years before, during the horrors of a winter retreat in one of those idiotic campaigns of Louis XV's government. But the State to him was something incalculable like the weather. He reserved his passion for the personal life of conduct, tastes, and sentiments. It was upon the individual that his mind played, and the individual whom he dissected and encouraged with such delicacy and highmindedness. "Glory" to him was more than victory, more than sacrifice. It was the cultivation of a high personal excellence that should meet a calm and convinced approval reflected in the society among which one lived.

If these moralists, in their terrible love of truth, their passion for sincerity, represent the truest aristocracy of mind, then in this military mysticism of 1914 there is something softer than they, less triumphant, less pure. Mr. Gosse himself suggests for this last gallantry of France a less remote source. He speaks of the relief that the war brought to her youth in a "new comprehension of the unity of life." "War had become," he says, "what dogmatic religion is to a weak soul tossed about by waves of doubt." In that younger generation "life had been producing upon their consciences a sense of complications, a tangle of too many problems. Now they might, and did, cheerfully relinquish the effort to solve them."

Was their tangle perhaps due to their evasion of just those resolute democratic currents of their time that now are triumphing? So that the nationalism and religion on which they had to fall back could teach them only to die and not to live? Mr. Gosse is even less of a sociologist than he is a psychologist. His purpose is not to make us wonder how a moral tradition that began with the sternest facing of life, and with working out into polished wisdom the experience of courageous minds, could end in a spirit that courted death in war because its vision was too weak to untangle the world that confronted it. He wants only to make us feel the esthetic charm of that sacrifice. And he is right and beautifully persuasive. He has paid his tribute of love to the gallant soldiers, and he has given us essays on the great moralists which are the flower of a familiar and informing criticism.

RANDOLPH BOURNE.

# THE DIAL

CLARENCE BRITTEN  
GEORGE DONLIN

HAROLD STEARNS  
SCOFIELD THAYER

*In Charge of the Reconstruction Program:*

JOHN DEWEY

THORSTEIN VEBLEN

HELEN MAROT

DOES AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION SUPPORT THE idea of a League of Nations? To many the question itself may seem impertinent skepticism in view of President Wilson's clear and persuasive exposition, in his recent Liberty Loan speech, of our commitment to the creation of a League of Nations as our central and dominating purpose in this war. But we raise the question only to help in making sure that the answer will be in the affirmative. Just because the President has made the creation of such a League of supreme importance—and rightly so—it is the part of wisdom to recognize the forces which are subtly and openly attempting to make the idea mere empty rhetoric. It is folly for liberals blandly to assume that a League of Nations will come into existence by a sort of spontaneous political generation; in fact, the fight for it has just begun. And with the close of formal hostilities the struggle will become genuine. Perhaps the subtlest form of attack is the current form—damning with faint praise. Today everybody believes in a League of Nations precisely because nobody takes it seriously. But tomorrow or the day after we shall have to take it seriously, because President Wilson will compel us to. Will everybody believe in it then—when it is a reality rather than a pleasant gesture towards Utopia? We have no assurance. Public opinion today probably supports it almost in proportion to its failure to understand what a League of Nations implies. It has all the war-time prestige of the President himself behind it. But when peace comes, those who during the war have so ill restrained their contempt for the President will vent all their suppressed spite on his programme for rehabilitation of the world's shattered political and economic structures. Worst of all, the acceptance by Germany of the idea will be used against it, for whatever issues from that unhappy country for some time to come will be tainted with suspicion. There will be ingenious fanatics ready to prove that, whatever happens, the world remains full of horrible dangers to the soil and happiness of these United States, and that we must under any circumstances remain armed to the teeth. The reactionaries will control a large section of the public press and they will exploit this advantage to the utmost. Great financial and industrial interests will instinctively rally to the defense of all the economic and trade advantages which the war has

brought us, and they will drag with them large sections of the thoughtless labor which sees in these increased advantages increased wages for itself. Unlike the European reaction, whatever liberalizing effect our returned soldiers may have on political issues will come too late to modify radically the nature of that momentous treaty of peace which will be signed long before the last soldier is demobilized. Furthermore, although the logic and fact of international economic interdependence may strike the intellectual as the merest of ratiocinative a b c, the emotions which cluster around our traditional isolation still exist in some measure. Most of our statesmen and official public leaders will relinquish the notion of complete national sovereignty only with their dying breath; as long as they can they will play on these emotions—they know no others. All this is the black side of the American picture.\* Against it we can put only—President Wilson. But if he has to play a lone hand, if he has to try to incorporate his program with his own country apathetic where not hostile, how great are his chances of success, even with the peoples of other countries behind him? It seems to us his chances are slim—chances on which no American liberal can afford to rely. It is a pity that liberal opinion in this country has too often been identified with anti-war opinion, and thus to a great extent discredited—sometimes with the seeming approval of departmental Tories. Recrimination now however is petty. The issue is immediate and urgent. Shall President Wilson have whole-hearted support from American opinion when he attempts to put through his liberal program for a League of Nations? The answer rests with the liberals, who today seem to be hypnotized into thinking that everything is coming out all right anyway. But everything is not coming out all right unless we fight for it. Already the attack against a League of Nations has formally begun in the United States Senate and in such typically militaristic newspapers as The New York Tribune. Even among certain intellectuals of the John Bassett Moore type the ancient wisdom plucks up courage to inform us that man does not change, except possibly for the worse, and that therefore to hope to abolish conflict by any such shaky machinery as a League of Nations is merely an amiable illusion characteristic of all wars. It is high time for the counter attack to begin.

UNFORTUNATELY MOST PEOPLE IN THE UNITED States still believe it is possible for us to maintain an industrial machinery which is competent for our purposes without bothering about that intensive cultivation of industrial enterprise which was necessary in Germany and is now imperative in England. We still believe that we stand a chance of competing successfully for foreign markets and of retaining our war trade prizes without the reorganization that other nations are attempting. We are still dominated by the laissez-faire tradition. Consequently the real difficulty in reorganization and in selecting leadership for fundamental social change is inherent in the situation. Business men, for instance, want a business man to head any government after-the-war planning commission which may be created. Their qualification, to them of course self-evident, is their experience in promoting business. In the world before the war, promoting business and producing wealth were one and the same thing, and so were promoting business and producing profits. Today we are told, as Mr. Frederick tells us on another page, that the business man is changing and his vision extending. It is hinted that he wants to produce for the good of society—which must mean that he wants to produce for those who most need goods, and to sell at the lowest possible cost consistent with social economy. If this is the sort of business man the war has evolved, he should by all means be given the leadership in industrial organization. Certainly if President Wilson has the appointment of a Reconstruction Commission and names a business man as leader, the appointee will have to be one of the new variety. If the President wins out in his stated policy, this appointee of necessity would be a man who sees the trade of tomorrow in terms of world instead of business economy, national or private. Although we fully recognize the sincerity of those who believe in this new type of business man, shall we be thought ungenerous if we still maintain a certain skepticism concerning the completeness of the regeneration? But, you say, will not labor supply us with the necessary leadership? We recognize certain qualifications of the labor man which are not keenly appreciated by the business man. The labor man is more conscious than others of where industry, under the direction of business, has failed. The situation as a working and living proposition, for the mass of people who came under the direction of business, was about as iniquitous as any scheme of management that could be devised. And a consciousness of that fact is the first requisite for leadership in any social reorganization that will fulfill the high standards of the common life which the President insists shall animate the rebuilding of our institutions. But we are painfully conscious that labor in America, organized and unorganized, has shown no disposition to direct the industrial renaissance which is to follow the war.

It is obsessed by the thought that it must hold to what it has, and all energy is diverted to that end. Now if in the situation itself, if both in the business and labor world, the chances seem slim for the evolution of effective leadership, where are we to turn? The leaders of any Federal reconstruction commission will after all be able to go only as far as unofficial organized public opinion and public action demand. That opinion is beginning to express itself. A business man's convention on the subject of reconstruction is all to the good. It is to be hoped that there will be a great national labor convention devoted to the same subject—not a convention ending in futile resolutions, but a convention, through committees, of continuous performance. The Institutes of Architecture, various Chambers of Commerce have established the American City Bureau, which plans to tender the services of its committee to the government and to work on reconstruction measures. The ban against talking anything but war is lifting. Even the newspapers are beginning to report reconstruction activity.

THAT MORALE IS IN ANY WAY WEAKENED BY TALK of reconstruction after the war is today an exploded myth. The pretty political race between the Overman and Weeks resolutions for a committee on reconstruction problems is only the public and formal recognition of what has long been recognized privately. Perhaps the thinnest argument against talk about after-the-war problems was the argument that such discussion tended to divert soldiers' minds from the severe immediate tasks of fighting. As a matter of fact almost the first thing the common soldier thinks about is what is going to happen to him after the war. A recent letter to *The New York World*, headed *When the Soldiers Come Back to Work*, illustrates our meaning:

To the Editor of *The World*:

In the issue of *The World* of Sept. 22 appears a note under the heading *After the War*, in which the writer says: "Following the usual conditions that obtain after a war, they will have to become tramps and beggars."

He refers to our army and navy boys. After the war our boys will not have to become tramps or beggars, as labor of all kinds will be in demand.

G. A. R.

New York, Sept. 23.

Does this mean that the boys who come back are to have good positions or be bossed by the slackers who have stayed home from war and taken the good positions? Or are they to have their old jobs back or better ones?

A Man in the U. S. Regulars.

It ought to be obvious that no single fact can be more comforting to the man in the ranks than the known fact that plans are being made for his return home. The knowledge that he is coming back to a job, that the government does not intend to cast him adrift on the uncertain industrial world immediately following the war, stimulates and en-

courages the soldier even more than a laudatory paragraph in his home town newspaper. Furthermore it makes him feel that he is a part of a social organization which regards his permanent welfare as as important as his fitness for service. Reconstruction plans of a genuine and far-reaching kind are the best possible aids to the soldiers' morale. They are better men for these plans—and better fighters. They have the dignity which comes to every man who is made to feel that he is of lasting social value. From the temper of the letter which we quote it can be seen that reconstruction plans for the returned soldier must be a reality and not a sham. He will not tolerate mere grudging patronage.

THE RECENT ORDER OF THE WAR DEPARTMENT permitting soldiers to write for publication, because with the new draft "practically all the literary talent of the country has been called into the service," has already evoked amused comments from some of our newspapers. Of course what impresses the editors of the daily press is that section of the order reading: "Soldiers will not be permitted, however, to act as regular newspaper correspondents, nor to criticize conditions. Their output must contain nothing relating to the military profession, the war, or to current events." "Under the absurd 'freedom' offered by the new edict," remarks The New York Globe petulantly, "such works as *Under Fire* and *In Flanders Fields*, or the memorable lines, *I Have a Rendezvous With Death*, would be impossible." The Globe is correct. If an American soldier were to write a book like *Under Fire*, it would not only be impossible to get the volume published—it would be dangerous even to try. But what strikes us particularly in the new order is the assumption that most of the literary talent of the country has been called into service. Has the War Department forgotten that almost fifty per cent of the literary talent in this country is revealed by our women writers? And why were the claims of the writers between the ages of 21 and 31 of less urgency than those between the ages of 31 and 45, and 18 and 21? Is maturity of style and thought the test of literary talent? We must confess that there are times when we wish the War Department's assumption were founded on clear fact, and that it was literally true that practically all of the literary talent of the country had been called into service, meaning by "service" military service in the strictest sense. For the truth is that literary talent never seemed to exist in such melancholy profusion as it does today. Never were pamphlets so abundant. Our Vigilantes and our Defense Leagues and our Security Leagues seem to have no difficulty in finding all the literary talent they need. Hitherto quiet Cabinet members have become authors and writers of special articles. Every department in Washington resounds with the click of the typewriters of the publicity men. Thousands

of "stories" are produced every day. Probably the War Department does not regard these products as literature: its standard of literature is set high. Literature consists of novels and plays and poetry—written, of course, with no reference to the ephemeral and uninteresting present but solely and severely in the light of the eternal verities. With so meticulous an order of excellence demanded, The Globe's suggestion remains sound. It advises our soldier writers to disport themselves with such pleasing effusions as *An Ode to a Wild Thyme* and *An Epic on Epictetus*.

THE COMING OF PEACE WILL BRING TO OUR SYSTEM of wealth production further changes than those which the war has already induced. But for the present at least it is unlikely that these changes will be as drastic as those that are taking place in England. They will be in the nature of revisions. Americans generally are not yet fully aware that fundamental reorganizations of our economic life are imperative: consequently we have no guarantee that the direction which these inevitable revisions will take may not be reactionary instead of progressive. During the coming year THE DIAL hopes to indicate what direction is actually being taken—and also, of course, what direction we consider desirable. Already we can see the outlines of what the desirable direction must be. We hope to record an increasing interest in wealth production as a national matter, in contradistinction to wealth production as a mere private adventure in gain, also an interest in wealth production as an international in contradistinction to a national concern. We further hope that labor organizations will work together with production efficiency managers toward a democratic control of industry, and forestall state administration. In any case our interest in reconstruction will center not only in immediate problems, such as demobilization, but in the more permanent problems of organization: in labor status, trade union function, industrial leadership, determination of cost of production, price, wage rates, the relation of industry to the state and the function of the state itself, the standardization of products, and the "rationing" of essential trades. We shall be particularly interested in the economic aspect of a League of Nations, in the working out of machinery which contemplates the establishment of international banking and credit, in the distribution of goods on the basis of world economy, in an international merchant marine and waterways commission, and in the abolition of import duties. We shall also give attention to the reorganization of the schools, from the kindergarten to the universities, and to the experimental work which the school and psychological laboratories are now undertaking. As economic problems underlie and give point to political problems, we shall give the former somewhat fuller consideration.

## Foreign Comment

## THE PRECIPICE

Who today remembers Lord Grey's warning to Prince Lichnowsky, late in July 1914, that a general European war might well produce "another 1848"? Perhaps the German autocrats today remember it as their armies retreat and their people mutter their criticism of the war as "the great swindle." But certainly few thought in those days and even fewer in America today think that the dire prophecy can possibly have any application to England. England of all countries, we feel, has too much political good sense ever to resort to the expensive expedient of revolution in order to bring about imperative social changes. The political framework is elastic enough to permit of infinite adaptation: it is the admiration of more volatile peoples. Even under the pressure of war our conventional conceptions have not fundamentally changed, and the stories of English workers being on the whole better clothed and fed and housed than ever in England's peace-time history have been accepted as a surprising but indubitable paradox of the great war. But in a remarkable editorial in the September 14 issue of *The London New Statesman* that moderate journal asks some very disturbing questions. The editorial is called, ominously enough, *The Precipice*. For 1918 "another 1848" would mean, the journal says, (as has been seen in Russia)

not thrones alone that would be upset—perhaps not thrones at all—but that mysterious framework of the social order which contrives, in this country as in others, that nine-tenths of the accumulated wealth should be "owned" by one-tenth of the population, with the result that two-thirds of the population find themselves restricted, for their means of livelihood, to something like one-third of the common product annually. The rent and interest abstracted from each year's product, irrespective of any contemporary service rendered by their recipients, account, perhaps, for something like another third, whilst the profits and salaries of the relatively small class which actually manages our concerns for us, or renders professional services of one or other kind, probably amount to as much more.

The net effect of the war, *The New Statesman* goes on, has been on the whole to aggravate the inequality in the distribution of wealth as between the four-fifths of the population, on the one hand, who are spoken of as the masses, and the one-fifth of the population, on the other, who constitute the middle and upper classes. And it is the general principle of inequality which is exciting the present labor unrest in England.

If we could take the manual working, wage-earning class as a whole, we might perhaps compute that there was, in the aggregate, now no diminution of their total real income, measured in commodities, as compared with that of five years ago. The data for any exact estimate do not exist. But it is not aggregates or averages that matter to the individual or the particular group, just as the fairness and humanity of some, or even of a great majority, of the employers fail to atone for the harshness,

inconsiderateness, or tyranny of the worst of them. Where the shoe pinches there will be the pain. And what the wage-earning class is more than ever aware of is that it is, fundamentally, the monstrous inequality in the distribution of wealth, and the social autocracy which it permits, that is the cause of the wage earner's penury. This conviction is reinforced by a sense of injustice and unfair treatment which is far more widespread and far more acute than optimistic observers drawn from the governing class ever realise. The wage-earners, rightly or wrongly, feel that they have been "done." The long-drawn-out struggle between the Government Departments, the employers and the Trade Unions, over the suspension of Trade Union conditions, the "dilution" of skilled labour, the replacement of men by women, the successive war bonuses and advances has—whether justifiably so or not—produced the impression that the wage-earners have been cheated, and that they are destined to be further cheated.

Of course everyone recognizes that the social order cannot be radically changed during the war itself, even though the governing classes are admittedly at the mercy of the organized wage-earners. Unity will somehow or other be maintained as long as hostilities continue. But what of those days just around the corner?

It is when peace comes that we shall get to the verge of the precipice. The social pyramid, already topheavy, will find dumped upon it the immense load of war-debt, and the very considerable charge involved in Social Reconstruction. Apparently no one outside the Labour Party dares to face what will have to be done. Labour and the New Social Order—the very explicit programme of the Labour Party—which describes how the task can be accomplished constitutionally, without "Bolshevism," in fact, according to all the wisdom of the most orthodox economists, is so far unanswered, and without rival. Will either Mr. Lloyd George or Mr. Asquith tell us, in emulation of the Labour Party, how they propose to discharge the war-debt, rebuild the social machinery, and maintain the Standard of Life—how they intend to secure the necessary increase in the production, not of profits, but of commodities and services, and at the same time provide anything like a genuine equality of opportunity, alike in home, health, education and the conditions for the training and exercise of faculty—without putting an end to that permanently unequal distribution of personal wealth which is involved in unrestricted inheritance, and to the colossal annual waste involved in the idle lives and sterilised brains that inevitably accompany the existence of a *rentier* class.

## BOYCOTTING GERMANY

At a time when the proposal for boycotting Germany commercially after the war seems to be winning considerable popular support in this country, we can profit by examining the views of those who in the countries of our Allies have suffered incalculably more from German military aggression than we so far have. Liberal opinion in England is almost unanimously against the proposal. The Congress of Trade Unions, representing the reasoned labor opinion of that country, voted against it. M. Albert Thomas, in many ways the most conservative of the French Socialists, has—in his recent discussion of the League of Nations in the columns of *The London Daily Chronicle*—coiently put the philo-

philosophical reasons for not excluding Germany from the League, even if the Hohenzollerns should not be deposed. The clearest and most forceful argument against the exclusion of Germany however is the argument presented by The Manchester Guardian. The emotional appeal of the proposal is simple. Shall the guilty go unpunished? But as The Guardian points out, it will be precisely the guilty and no other who will profit by the boycott:

Germany under a boycott will resume military preparations the moment peace is concluded. The people will not accept the offer of immunity from the boycott on condition of revolution. The very challenge will make them give up all talk of internal revolution. The dynasty will be safe, and all the people will feel that they must fight again for the bare necessities of a modern industrial and commercial existence. The paradoxical result of the desire to punish the guilty will be to preserve the most guilty, the heads of the nation, from punishment. The Congress felt justly that the economic question is part of the general problem of peace. If we fail to make the peace we want, then we shall relapse into a state of competition in which every effort will be made in both camps to strengthen their own and weaken the opposite party. To such a state of things the boycott is appropriate. If, on the other hand, we get the peace we desire, as we mean to do, then it must be a peace with all the conditions of permanence—that is, a peace which contains no conditions against which one side is bound by the very necessities of its existence to revolt.

Happily, President Wilson in his speech of September 27 put America squarely behind the policy of not boycotting Germany except specifically "as the power of economic penalty by exclusion from the markets of the world may be vested in the League of Nations itself as a means of discipline and control."

## Communications

### THE NATION'S PROBLEM

SIR: I am hopeful that the early recognition by THE DIAL and other intellectual forces of the country of the necessity for hard thinking on the problem and social possibilities of reconstruction after the war will lead to the visualizing of this opportunity in a big way. One of the most hopeful things in Great Britain is the official reports which have already been issued and the general attitude on the subject on the part of the Ministry, Parliament, and organized agencies. There seems to be a realization that the soldier, the worker, and the civilian will never go back to the old order and that only through a big-visioned program of the state can the problems be worked out. The problem is none the less acute in the United States. It involves, aside from the mechanics of rehabilitation of the soldier and the worker, a mobilization of thought on education, on industry, on transportation, on farming—on the kind of society we want for the future. Shall we send the soldier back to his old job in the mill and the mine? shall we permit him to shift for himself? shall we accept the old philosophy of individualism? or shall we consciously build a new kind of state,

aiming at industrial and economic liberty, the enlarging of the opportunities of the workers, the creation of a partnership with capital, and especially the development of a big program of internal improvements, including a nation-wide transportation system, the reclamation of waste lands, the development of hydro-electric power for the railroads, industrial, and social needs, the opening up of monopolized lands and forests, and the development of a new kind of agriculture that will make the back-to-the-land movement as alluring to the soldier and the worker as it is desirable?

America came to the end of an era just before the outbreak of the war, an era that began with the early colonists and ended with the enclosure of all of the lands and resources of the nation. We were ripe for a new political and social movement that would make permanent the best traditions of the country and would reopen the owned but only touched resources of the country to the present generation—a generation condemned by necessity to the position of wage-earner, tenant, or agricultural worker by the ending of that freedom of access to the land which has been the characteristic feature of America since the first settler landed in New England three centuries ago down to the enclosure of the public domain.

The problem is thus an economic one. It is also educational. And it can only be carried through by the nation. It is an obligation not only to the soldier but to the future that the reconstruction which follows shall be directed by a definite ideal of what democracy should mean to a free people.

New York City.

FREDERIC C. HOWE.

### FAMILY-ALBUM AMERICANISM

SIR: Mr. Devere Allen does not realize how much I like the tone, if not the substance, of his article in THE DIAL of October 5. If he had written my letter, I might have written his, with a few changes. In some of these matters the tone is essential, and goes farther into legislation than he realizes. Mr. Allen is apparently an American, of the old school, with a family album. As such I welcome him to the ranks of the American radicals. We need more such, to overcome the present overwhelming majority of hyphenates. I hope he brings all the live people that are in the album with him, and puts them in control of all our fire-eating societies. They do not need to be Daughters and Sons of the American Revolution. Simply to have been in somebody's family album is sufficient. Few of our really sizzling leaders of political thought have been in America long enough for that achievement. Some of them have not even waited to get their photographs upon the parlor mantles, or into the local papers, experiences I deem essential to a genuine political insight.

Springfield, Illinois.

VACHEL LINDSAY.

## Notes on New Books

**THE SUNNY SOUTH AND ITS PEOPLE.** By C. W. Johnston. Rand McNally; \$1.50.

As a compilation of facts regarding numerous towns and villages south of Mason and Dixon's line, this book can truthfully be said to have a modicum of reference value, but so hidden are the data among inconsequential observations, inappropriate comments, and futile rhetoric that the reader must exercise extraordinary forbearance. The author's asides are sententious and often amusing, taking the form of homilies on honesty, diatribes against tipping, and justification of war. Of Fortress Monroe he says: "Fortress Monroe is located on a beautiful body of water—Hampton Roads. It is very old and fully a mile long." That is a fair indication of what the book is like.

**HANDBOOK OF FURNITURE STYLES.** By Walter A. Dyer. Century; \$1.50.

Here is a brief and admirable manual on furniture periods, and one which quite satisfactorily fulfills its author's desire to meet the need for a "primer of a fascinating and useful study." Without any attempt to be exhaustive it contrives to cover the field with much skill, both in the selection and arrangement of material and in the choice of illustrations to supplement the text. Mr. Dyer succeeds in a lucid exposition of the various periods, showing what influences brought them into existence and what other influences caused them to be displaced.

To those who are familiar with the field, the book may bring nothing new, but within the scope of its intention it is well executed. The author has avoided the dangers of too much elaboration and the equally deplorable error of sketchiness. Not only does he survey the historical periods, but in the last chapter he does not hesitate to bring American styles right down to date. One is pleased to find him disposing of mission furniture in half a sentence. The volume includes a brief bibliography, and a table of styles showing the sovereigns, the leading craftsmen, structural details, and significant pieces.

**THE HEART OF ALSACE.** By Benjamin Vallotton. Dodd, Mead; \$1.50.

It is impossible to imagine a more effective piece of propaganda for the Alsatian cause than this novel by a Swiss who spent twelve years in Alsace. He does not press his point or rail against the German rulers. But he pictures in innumerable incidents, and with the most sensitive feeling for the charm of the country, the life of suppressed passion which those villagers live that retain all their old fondness and loyalty to France. It is not so much brutal oppression that these Alsations experience from their uncongenial overlords as the endless spying and ferreting, the endless vigilance of a German machine

faithful to its dogged conception of power and blinded by its own strength. The story revolves around the work of a young schoolmaster who comes to an Alsatian village from Switzerland. He meets the families of the notables, both the petty German functionaries who preach a continual *Deutschtum*, and the old stock with German names but with an incorrigible adoration for France. Their occasional excursions to some French village over the border are like breaths of fresh air. And when the war comes, the great tragedy is that some of the youth have been absorbed into the German military machine and are either lost in the snows of Poland or fighting against their beloved France. What the initial invasion of the French into Alsace meant to the inhabitants of the villages in the path of the long-desired liberation is told in touching letters from some of the young French soldiers who had relatives there. The long drama of forty-four years is rounded out by this jubilant restoration. They were only a few villages, but they were the symbol of release from the hateful regime that heretofore they could only ridicule and mildly insult but never oppose. Yet there is a note of tenderness in the book, as if to imply that the barriers between these plain French and German people of Alsace are largely the artificial product of government, and that when governmental justice has been done, all may enjoy in a new friendliness that lovely land.

**MEMOIRS OF MERCY ARGENTEAU.** Translated and edited with an introduction by George S. Hellman. 2 vols. Putnam; \$10.

Two brief manuscripts left by Count Mercy d'Argenteau, and never before printed, have been translated and published in these two beautiful volumes. The memoirs do not make a continuous account of the author's life, but deal with two distinct periods in his career—the period of his service in the household of Napoleon, and the period of his service under King William of Holland. The first volume is the less important of the two, being no more than a sketchy and conventional relation of unimportant episodes and incidents. It adds nothing to our knowledge of Napoleon, and will be of use only to the biographer, if ever one is needed, of this diligent but politically negligible servant of the Emperor. The second volume has a greater historical value. It is concerned chiefly with the author's unavailing efforts, in 1830, to bring the stubborn Dutch king to adopt a policy in dealing with Belgium that might conceivably have prevented the Revolution. Students of the Belgian Revolution, and students of the July Revolution in France, will find this volume of some use. The introductions by Mr. Hellman, nearly as long in the case of the first volume as the memoir itself, give all necessary information about the author and his manuscripts, and place a far higher estimate upon the services of the one and the value of the other than they deserve.

WISCONSIN PLAYS: Second Series—The Feast of the Holy Innocents, by S. Marshall Ilsley; On the Pier, by Laura Sherry; The Shadow, by Howard Mumford Jones; We Live Again, by Thornton Gilman. Introduction by Zona Gale. Huebsch; \$1.50.

No other band of workers in our little theaters has justified higher expectations than the Wisconsin Dramatic Society. Their productions—managed, staged, and acted by enthusiastic, serious-minded amateurs—have deserved and have won the support of all classes of their public. The wholesome educational influence of these productions for a better appreciation of good drama has been effectively seconded by the public meetings of the Society, by its publications, by lectures held under its auspices. The policy of encouraging new playwrights, especially Wisconsin playwrights, is a definite expression of the hope that our little theaters will be schools for American dramatists. In the first, fine meaning of the word the Wisconsin Dramatic has been "popular" both in its aims and its achievements, and a host of sympathetic friends all over America look to this distinctly Middle West organization for guidance and inspiration. The disappointment of these admirers in the Second Series of the Wisconsin Plays will be great.

Instead of fulfilling our high expectations, three of the four plays in this volume confirm the most skeptical fears of sundry unfriendly critics of the little theaters. They are not only commonplace in conception, but also immature in expression, and even faulty in construction. Perhaps it is most just to consider them as examples of exercises from the primary grade in the school of play-writing, but only a doting parent could find in them any promise for the future. The single play of distinction in the book is *The Shadow*. There is a real thought behind this pretty little fantasy, and Mr. Jones has most skilfully woven the atmosphere of his autumnal woods setting into the allegory of Memory. The final effect achieved is worthy of warmest praise, and it is to be hoped that the play will be popular with competent little-theater companies. The signal success of *The Shadow* emphasizes the fact that it is the only play of this volume that is not realistic in spirit and local in genre. In view of the romantic tendencies of the little theaters this may not be a coincidence. At least Mr. Jones points a way by which little-theater playwrights may avoid provincialism and the deadly lack of dramatic interest—provided they possess his imagination and charm of expression.

SIMBA. By Stewart Edward White. Doubleday, Page; \$1.40.

After two voyages to the land of Livingstone and Stanley, Mr. White has become sufficiently at home in Africa to invite his readers to go along with him.

Among the savage tribes that inhabit what he calls the last frontier of the race, and who "grinned amiably, and promised lavishly, and sat in the sun," it is the fortunes of the lad Simba which make the story. A splendid young fellow of whom any civilization might be proud, he progresses from the naked village boy sucking a sugar-cane in the first chapter to become gunbearer to Cunningham, the great elephant hunter, and to meet the white man's civilization in the coast towns. Naturally the mingling of whites and blacks gives opportunity for considerable chiaroscuro effect. The book is one of vivid contrasts. Mr. White's genuine appreciation of the native African precludes that jocular condescension, customary in the usual writer of southern travels. His sense of humor however cannot overlook the ubiquitous race of medicine men, nor the perplexities of European officials in the face of local traditions and taboos. Unexpectedly, though frequently enough, one comes upon a turn like the following which flashes up a whole scene. In stumbling upon his first herd of browsing elephants Simba "listened with something approaching awe to the thunder-like rumblings of digestion." And the first newly arrived white tourists looked to him "anaemic, bloodless, like grubs dug out of a log." If Mr. White must be compared to Kipling, it is to the Kipling of *Kim*, with its rich sympathies, rather than to the caustic writer of *Plain Tales*.

LES DESSOUS DU CONGRES DE VIENNE. By Commandant Weil. Payot, Paris; 20 f.

The Congress of Vienna has been the recipient latterly of many uncomplimentary remarks from our American publicists, official or unofficial. In some cases there seems to have been a little uncertainty as to when the Congress was held, or why, but as the rigor of the proffered condemnation of its conduct has not thereby been abated, no ethical injury has been done our people. Indeed the Congress has tended to supplant the French Revolution, at least temporarily, as a term of general opprobrium. It is perhaps just as well that our diplomatic millenarians have not known the things revealed in these two portly volumes, or the clamor of outraged morality might have become excessive and rather trying. Commandant Weil has produced a fresh, interesting, and valuable work. He has patiently ransacked the archives of Vienna and has faithfully transcribed nearly three thousand letters, reports, and memoranda concerning the activities of the innumerable diplomatic agents of high or low degree who converged upon Vienna in the summer of 1814, only to leave it, when they had done their utmost, a few days before Waterloo. The documents here printed fill fifteen hundred pages and they are derived from the Austrian Ministry of Police and Censorship, over which presided, in 1814 and 1815, a most urbane and competent man, Baron Hager, who deserves

mention even in an age rendered illustrious by a Fouché. Hager was a sublimated chief of police and he performed his duties to the king's taste, or rather to the taste of the Emperor, Francis II.

Francis was the host to all the highnesses and notables who thronged his capital during the many months of the Congress, and it must be said that he met the demands of the situation in large and lavish fashion. No monarch was ever more imperially hospitable. Endless were the amusements and diversions provided by the Court of Vienna to those who had crowded within its gates, and almost endless was the expense, blithely contracted by a state which was practically bankrupt. But while open-handed and profuse in social ways, neither Francis nor his minister, Prince Metternich, was off his guard. Each was reasonably sophisticated. The host knew that he had with him a miscellaneous set of guests whom he had not himself selected but who had been thrust upon him. Consequently he instructed his police to keep a sharp watch over them all, from the Emperor of Russia down to the chargé d'affaires of the most insignificant German principality. The Austrian secret police, presided over by Baron Hager, shadowed everyone connected with the Congress, using means known to the profession to get information as to the goings and comings, the doings and sayings, the intentions and connections of all these agents engaged in the diplomatic hurly-burly. It was an espionage of the high-born, as elaborate as it was ingenious and ubiquitous. The laws of hospitality did not preclude the opening of letters by the Post Office, the filching of documents from the persons of special messengers, the placing of government spies as servants in the houses of the diplomatists, in the desire to find out what all these people were up to. The methods were as shameless as they needed to be, no more. Every morning all this information—arranged, docketed, classified—was laid before the Emperor by Baron Hager, and the Emperor enjoyed it. It was his idea of statecraft and it was within the range of his intellectual powers.

This is the material that has now been published by Commandant Weil. It makes very curious and interesting reading. It is really a source-book in the intrigues, rumors, slanders, scandals, the backbiting, and eavesdropping characteristic of the mighty and their hangers-on at a great international assembly. Virtue itself escaped not calumny in that happy age. These volumes present the seamy side of history, and as history has that side, it may as well be looked at serenely and intently. They also present much that is not seamy. They give us a kind of gossip de luxe connected with great persons, great problems, and a great historic occasion. They enable us a little to see history in the process of making. The process is not complete; the materials are fragmentary and not always of the most authentic quality; yet of such stuff are the annals of our race, in part, made up.

Mr. Weil has produced a vivid book and he has proved himself a model editor, sparing no pains to give the reader every possible aid to a comprehension of the documents. His biographical and historical notes are numerous, adequate, and illuminating, and they must have been the product, in very many cases, of extensive and difficult research. Such painstaking thoroughness is entitled to the reader's lively gratitude.

OVER THE THRESHOLD OF WAR. By Nevil Monroe Hopkins. Lippincott; \$5.

There is one rather thrilling description among these reminiscences that shows the author under fire. Although a minor diplomatic officer, he had taken advantage of being registered with the Red Cross to see what was being done at the front, and he arrived during the retreat from Mons. Fortunately for him, he was with a battery that was able to repulse a German attack, and he lived to tell the tale in a book that otherwise is as commonplace in subject matter as it is sumptuous in format. Mr. Hopkins' observations are at least an indication, however, that he had a remarkably interesting though not altogether comfortable time watching frenzied Americans trying to get the first boat home, German airplanes raiding Paris, infuriated Parisians smashing German shops, and many other urban and suburban activities incident to the beginning of the great war. His experiences also included a trip to Berlin and the conquered portion of Belgium, and the inevitable arrest as a suspected spy.

PORTUGUESE PORTRAITS. By Aubrey F. G. Bell. Longmans, Green & Co.; \$1.75.

To most Americans Portugal is an unknown land. Lately, impelled in great measure because of trade possibilities with South America, our ignorance of things Spanish and South American has been somewhat lessened; we are beginning to discover, with no little surprise, that the continent to the south of ours, despite the many handicaps under which authorship labors, has produced a surprising array of literary creators. As to Portugal and Brazil however we are as much in the dark as ever. We do not realize the great distinction between the Spaniards and Portuguese, nor the significance of a better understanding of the latter. Were it from a purely commercial point of view alone this is an error; for Brazil, the language of which is Portuguese, forms an appreciable part of South America and has developed a most interesting literature of its own.

It is of minor importance that Mr. Bell's seven essays upon famous Portuguese men of thought and action lacks a certain fullness, a certain breadth: while they are something more than sketches, they do not possess the depth of design that entitles them to be called portraits. But once this mere matter of

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terminology is passed over, one is glad to welcome the new book into the small family of studies in Portuguese history and culture. The author's essays are devoted to King Dinis (1261-1325), Nun' Alvarez (1360-1431), Prince Henry the Navigator (1394-1460), Vasco da Gama (1460?-1524), Duarte Pacheco Pereira (1465?-1533?), Afonso de Albuquerque (1462?-1515), and Dom João de Castro (1500-1548). The various accounts read much like a connected historical narrative, since the men chosen represent successive steps in the evolution of the Portuguese nation. One receives a marked impression of certain national characteristics—rude bravery, deep pride, indomitable persistence. "And something of their spirit survives in the Portugal of today," Bell tells us, "ready to reappear at a crisis—more of it, perhaps, than is generally imagined." To a modern, of course, in all these virtues there is a large admixture of vices; and it is easy to note, although Mr. Bell seeks to place no emphasis upon the point, what a distinctly commercial background lurked behind the historical conquests.

The portraits are done in soft, even colors; there are no violent contrasts; one can easily imagine that the dust of the ages has gathered on the canvases and given them a strange mellowness. Mr. Bell may be sure that a small but enthusiastic public will welcome another series, and yet another. The scant literature in English about matters Portuguese is a slight to the European nation and a discredit to ours. England, whence comes this book, is fast remedying the defect, chiefly through the admirable work of such writers as A. F. G. Bell and George Young.

**PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA AND THE WAR.** By Hereward Carrington. Dodd, Mead; \$2.

That the war is for many of the belligerents a reversion to a primitive state of mind, leaving only the primal instincts and the intensity of action necessary for self-defense, is a thesis which Mr. Carrington illustrates in his accounts of the psychology of the soldier. That the same process goes on in a revival of credulity and the rebirth of cruder beliefs is a thesis that singularly escapes him. A more baneful book, spreading darkness where even a feeble light would throw a glimmer of guidance, it is difficult to imagine. The "normal" part gives some account of Teutonic lack of insight, and some interesting instances of the change of mind and heart in the transformation of civilians into soldiers, and in the removal from shop or office to the trenches. The "supernormal" part is a top-heavy assemblage of the occult applied to war. It includes everything uncritically—prophecies, premonitions, spirit-communications, apparitions, coincidences, and all the rest of the telepathic artillery, which is as shell-proof as it is reason-proof and can be riddled to a frazzle and yet stay whole. Surely

we could have been spared this in war time; and doubtless one does it too much honor to give it notice. Mr. Carrington has taken part in exposing mediums and warns his readers against fraud; yet there are always black swans, and these carry him floating to the regions where common sense does not reach. Mr. Carrington devoted a book to Eusapia Palladino as the "blackest" of the swans. When she proved to be of the same color as the rest of her tribe Mr. Carrington (apparently) retained his faith, indeed enlarged it, so that now his appetite for marvels knows no bounds. To set forth this mixture of credulity and obscurantism as science is an insult and an injury. It suggests the necessity for Hooverizing on paper and print: the mental food-commissioner is a growing need.

**HOME FIRMS IN FRANCE.** By Dorothy Canfield. Holt; \$1.35.

It is as if some newspaper reporter, unusually sensitive to qualities and values, had listened to many people telling of themselves—refugees, American war workers for sweet snobbery's sake, homeless and maimed French soldiers—and had set down with fidelity eked out by imagination what they had said and something of the way they said it. That is the impression one has of Mrs. Fisher's book. At times she is the interpreter of French ways to Americans. Her *Notes From a French Village* are a record of French communal living, of high-enclosed gardens, of deep-rooted customs as a soldier boy from California, Connecticut, or Virginia might see them. In a parable, too, she has contrasted the French savor of life and feeling for individuality and quality—things in life which must be taken leisurely—with American insistence upon vast change for its own sometimes meaningless sake. The parable has fine spots of detail, as in the words of the old Frenchman, among his roses, spoken to a restless American visitor:

"My friend, humanity as a whole will never be worth more than the lives of its individuals are worth, and it takes many, many things to make individual lives worth while. It takes a mixture, and it needs, among other elements, some quiet, some peace, some leisure, some occupation with things of pure beauty like my roses, some fellowship with great minds of the past."

Sometimes Mrs. Fisher turns romanticist and imagines a Lord and Lady Bountiful, in Paris on their honeymoon, who do nothing but understand everyone's wants and give vast sums of money just where they are most desperately needed. Again there are studies from life at the rear, in which she reports simply her conversations with the French soldier on furlough from the hospital or the trenches. There are several studies in realism: the story of the soldier who returned to his home to find it in ruins; La Pharmacienne who turned from her life of domestic comfort to sweeping up the wreckage of her husband's

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band's shop, after she had borne her child and the Germans had passed over, and maintained herself and her children.

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**YESTERDAYS.** By Candace Wheeler. Harper; \$3.

James Russell Lowell was once entertaining this author in his Cambridge home. The latter was duly impressed with the grandeur, the dignity, and the charm of the literary life, and also with the antique furniture that contributed its share to the cultural atmosphere. She took occasion to admire enviously a beautiful old mahogany desk in the library, whereupon the author of *A Fable for Critics* replied, with that sportive solemnity characteristic of the New England intellect, "You can all have relics if you live long enough." Mrs. Wheeler has here in some four hundred pages demonstrated the truth of Lowell's epigram. It is an excellent and conscientiously thorough demonstration, whose principal fault is that very few of its readers will have the good fortune to be relatives, friends, or contemporaries of the author. For these reminiscences are of the type whose appeal is restricted: both the general reader and the seeker for daring and highly individualized literature will experience a certain impolite dissatisfaction with the various and exceedingly innocent relics presented to his gaze by this woman whose family, as she herself confesses, was a hundred years behind the times. William Cullen Bryant, Peter Cooper, John Burroughs, Mark Twain, Richard Watson Gilder, Julia Ward Howe—she knew all these and more, and she tells us about them and other celebrities whom she met abroad (Leighton, Whistler, Hardy, Millet, Brown-ing) and everything she says is so well-ordered, so circumspect, decorous, and distinguished! Particularly "exciting" is the account of a mysterious and apparently very indiscreet woman who to an alarming independence of spirit added the "sin" of paying open visits to the little house in the Bronx where lay slowly dying that strange outcast, Edgar Allan Poe. One would like to be told the name of

this audacious creature, but Mrs. Wheeler preserves her pages for less dubious adventures, although she does mention an unexpected visit from Oscar Wilde, who could find no one in New York willing to introduce him.

Yesterdays is not a human document but a family document: the people we meet in its pages are not human beings but "beautiful souls" (the author's own phrase); altogether, the kind of life to which it introduces us suggests the expression the author uses in speaking of her visits to "the great painters"—"We put on our best clothes and indulged in our best manners, as children do on great occasions."

**COLETTE BAUDOCHE.** By Maurice Barrés. Translated by Frances Wilson Huard. \$1.50.

Maurice Barrés, who under the mask of his sophisticated and highly intellectualized modern culture conceals the El Greco-esque features of a tenth century crusader, here gives us a theme very well suited to his unctuous and pontifical soul—Lorraine after the German occupation. The book, which one fears to call a novel, was written originally in 1908, with the intention of combating the false optimism wherewith Europe was contemplating the after-effects of the Franco-Prussian War. It is now warmed over for American readers—also to combat a false optimism? Briefly the book is an attempt to symbolize the conflict of two opposed cultures. Colette Baudoché, a native of Lorraine, lives with her grandmother in the old family residence in Metz. Both women are consecrated to their simple household duties; both are continually remembering or dreaming about l'ancien régime and regarding with a faint but insistent contempt everything German. To their house there comes, in search of rooms, Frederick Asmus—a big, naive, enthusiastic, and conscientious Prussian professor. Filled with the desire to reconcile the lumbering automatism of his fatherland with the evasive and delicate movements of Lorraine's native culture, this pedagogue seeks in every way to gain the esteem of his hostess and her pretty granddaughter. The narration of these attempts takes up practically the whole book, and the author loses no opportunity for making the invidious comparison. Lorraine versus Germany: character, plot, description, even dialogue—all are rigorously subordinated to this conception. It is done with great subtlety, and one admires the author's literary gymnastic, his powers of description, and his ability to portray the psychology of conqueror and vanquished. Nevertheless a reader sensitive to the artistic in literature becomes bored with the tone of advocate that runs through the pages: he begins to wish that everything were not so palpably, so irreconcilably either German or French; and at the last, when Colette, under the influence of the religious refemony in honor of the French heroes of 1870, refuses the marriage proposal offered by As-

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mus, he finds the work almost comic. Such a reader will close the book, saying: "This is a homily in the grand style, a work written by one of those intellects which, descended from the medieval scholastics, have overcome the disease of religious theology only to fall into a kind of secular theology, full of a strange twilight mysticism and vehemence. There is splendor in this theology, as in all things that are abstracted away from the crudities and contradictions of mere human existence: so long as men find necessary the idea of self-sacrifice this splendor of nationalistic idealism will also be necessary. Nevertheless

Nevertheless Maurice Barrés, for all his defects, is a powerful spokesman for a great mass of the French people. As a spokesman he naturally would no longer be able to impress or convince as an individual: his words and thoughts, like the dyer's hands, must be subdued to the color they work in. For Barrés this color is—France. As we watch him—this one-time "Enemy of the Laws," this "Cultivator of Self"—pursuing the road which perhaps has always been the one road for him, we can say, using his own words as applied to Germany, "Nothing arouses our irony more than a master in whom we recognize real inferiorities." We will join him in this irony: we will place him among the conquerors of literature.

WINGS IN THE NIGHT. By Alice Duer Miller. Century; \$1.

Mrs. Miller is clearly a twentieth century product. She is ready to use the most everyday events as poetic material. She is deeply interested in the liberal movements which, before the war, were considered symbolic of our progressive civilization. But she is not sufficiently practiced in poetic expression to be mistress of its finer subtleties. While her subjects are almost all novel, or at least modern in their setting, her models of technical excellence are to be found in the nineteenth century. And even their relative simplicity occasionally betrays her.

The difficulty with most of Mrs. Miller's work is that the propagandist in her gets the better of the poet. It is not that her desire for freedom and her scornful protest against stupid custom and cupidity are not fit for poetry. It is rather that her training as playwright and novelist has sharpened her sense of contrast and climax, and at the same time blunted the fervor which is the core of poetry. Her lyrics are clever rather than intense, pointed rather than poignant. For instance, there are the lines addressed to a certain gentleman who is opposed to woman suffrage on the score that "women are often tempters to sexual sin and delight in it." Mrs. Miller has small patience with this secure and self-righteous male, and her reply is none the less trenchant for being calm. But a conviction, however ethically sound and profoundly believed, is not in itself the stuff of which poetry is made. Mrs.

Miller is at her best in the lower intensities. Her smiling scorn of meek conventionality is evinced in the *History of a Minute*. It is one of the sharpest things in the book, both in its depiction of the "lady with butter-colored hair" and in the smooth terseness of its expression.

Certain qualities stand out in Mrs. Miller's verse: a simplicity of diction, an ardent sincerity, a psychological acuteness. Her technique is obviously imperfect, and one has too often the feeling that she has fabricated rather than created a poem. But her gifts are not common, and a stronger passion, a firmer reliance on her sense of drama may together bring her far beyond the merely agreeable achievement of the present volume.

### Books of the Fortnight

The following list comprises THE DIAL's selection of books recommended among the publications received during the last two weeks:

*The Economics of Progress*. By J. M. Robertson. 8vo, 298 pages. E. P. Dutton & Co. \$5.

*Australian Social Development*. By Clarence H. Northcott. 8vo, 442 pages. Columbia University Press. Paper, \$2.50.

*The Soviets at Work*. By Nikolai Lenin. 16mo, 48 pages. Rand School of Social Science. 15 cts.

*Essays in Scientific Synthesis*. By Eugenio Rignano. Translated by J. W. Greenstreet. 12mo, 254 pages. Open Court Publishing Co.

*The Education of Henry Adams: An Autobiography*. With an introduction by Henry Cabot Lodge. 8vo, 519 pages. Houghton Mifflin Co. \$5.

*Eminent Victorians*: Cardinal Manning, Florence Nightingale, Dr. Arnold, General Gordon. By Lytton Strachey. 8vo, 351 pages. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$3.50.

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## Current News

Two novels are announced by Harper & Bros.: *Foes*, by Mary Johnston, and *The Winds of Chance*, by Rex Beach.

*The World War and Leadership in Democracy*, by Richard T. Ely, is announced to appear under the Macmillan imprint this week.

*Walking-Stick Papers*, a group of essays by Robert Cortes Holliday, has just appeared under the Doran imprint.

Conrad Aiken's new volume of narrative poetry, *The Charnel Rose*, is set for issue on October 28 from the Four Seas press.

Thorstein Veblen's *The Higher Learning in America: A Memorandum on the Conduct of Universities by Business Men*, a part of which appeared in *THE DIAL* for September 5, is being prepared for publication the first of next month by B. W. Huebsch.

*Essays in Scientific Synthesis*, by Eugenio Rignano, editor of *Scientia*, which appeared in various French and Italian journals, have been translated by J. W. Greenstreet and issued in book form by the Open Court Publishing Co.

G. P. Putnam's Sons have in train for publication in their Library Edition *The Letters of Henry Brevoort to Washington Irving*, and *The Letters of Washington Irving to Henry Brevoort, 1807 to 1813*, edited by George S. Hellman.

Two more groups of short stories by Anton Chekhov, translated by Constance Garnett, are announced by the Macmillan Co. under the titles *The Chorus Girl and Other Stories*, and *The Bishop and Other Stories*.

The publications which D. Appleton & Co. have announced to appear in November are: *The Turn-over of Factory Labor*, by Samuel H. Slichter, with an introduction by John R. Commons; *The Life of Sir Joseph Hooker*, by Leonard Huxley; *Commercial Policy in War Time and After*, by William S. Culbertson; and *The Strategy of Minerals*, edited by George Otis Smith.

Five Somewhat Historical Plays, by Philip Moeller, four of which were produced by the Washington Square Players, have been brought out in book form by Alfred A. Knopf, who also offers a volume, *The Popular Theater*, by George Jean Nathan. *Architecture and Democracy*, by Claude Bragdon, and *Confessions of an Opera Singer*, by Kathleen Howard, are announced for publication this week.

B. W. Huebsch announces the authorized edition of James Joyce's volume of poems, *Chamber Music*, which was reviewed in *THE DIAL* for September 19. Four other volumes of verse are in course of preparation by the same publisher: *Look! We Have Come Through*, by D. H. Lawrence; *Chinese Lyrics from the Book of Jade*, by Judith Gautier, translated by James Whitall; *The Ghetto and Other Poems*, by Lola Ridge; and *A Family Album and Other Poems*, by Alter Brody.

The American copyright and publication rights on four volumes by Algernon Blackwood—the *Listener*, and *Other Stories*; *The Lost Valley*, and *Other Stories*; *The Empty House*, and *Other Stories*; and *John Silence*—have been taken over from Alfred A. Knopf by the E. P. Dutton Co. For immediate publication they announce a new novel by Mr. Blackwood, *The Garden of Survival*.

New titles recently added to The Modern Student's Library of Charles Scribner's Sons are: *The Essays of Addison and Steele*, selected and edited by Will D. Howe; *Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress*, edited by Dr. S. M. Crothers; and *Stevenson's Essays*, edited by William Lyon Phelps. Titles soon to be added are *The Heart of Midlothian*, edited by William P. Trent, and *Bacon's Essays*, edited by Mary Augusta Scott. A new, popular edition of *The Melancholy Tale of "Me": My Remembrances*, by Edward H. Sothorn, has just appeared under the Scribner imprint.

A memorial edition of the work of Joyce Kilmer, who was recently killed in action, containing previously published poems and essays together with a group of war poems and letters sent from overseas, is soon to be brought out by the George H. Doran Co. A memoir by Robert Cortes Holliday will be included. In tribute to Mr. Kilmer, Boni & Liveright—who published his *Dreams and Images: An Anthology of Catholic Poets*—are preparing a special limited edition of that volume. *Dreams and Images* was reviewed by C. K. Trueblood in *THE DIAL* for June 6.

## Contributors

Thorstein Veblen's article in this number is the first of a series of discussions of the psychology of reconstruction which will appear in successive issues under the general title *The Modern Point of View and the New Order*. This series resumes the argument of a group of lectures which Mr. Veblen delivered before students in Amherst College in May 1918.

The third and concluding installment of George Moore's *Imaginary Conversation with Mr. Gosse* will appear in the next number of *THE DIAL*, that of November 2.

J. George Frederick, author of *Reconstructing American Business*, in this issue, is Vice-President of the Business Bourse and Treasurer of the New York Sales Managers' Club, whose resolution calling for an after-the-war planning commission preceded action at Washington. He is to preside at an "after-the-war convention" of business men in Buffalo on October 25. Mr. Frederick is the author of several books and magazine articles.

Edna St. Vincent Millay is the author of *Renascence and Other Poems* (Kennerley), which Louis Untermeyer reviewed in *THE DIAL* for February 14.

The other contributors to this number have previously written for *THE DIAL*.

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